



Tory gloom after by-election defeats

Heseltine steps up challenge to silent Thatcher

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL Heseltine resumed his onslaught on the prime minister's attitude towards Europe yesterday, while his supporters stepped up the pressure on him to challenge her for the Conservative party leadership.

He said that people tended to misrepresent the role and motivations of Europe when they talked of federalism. Nobody seriously expected the creation of a federal Europe in which the member states surrendered their sovereignty to a common government. Only "a handful of people" thought such a thing conceivable.

Mr Heseltine's thinly-veiled attack on Margaret Thatcher's approach in a speech to

businessmen in Thame, Oxfordshire, came as two senior members of his Henley constituency party urged him to take her on for the leadership. His supporters will spend the weekend weighing up his chances of mounting a successful challenge after the gloomy by-election results on Merseyside and in West Yorkshire. Some believe that he is in his strongest position to wrest the leadership from the prime minister, but others fear that any challenge would be doomed to failure and that by coming forward now he would consign himself forever to the backbenches.

Mrs Thatcher, meanwhile, will spend the weekend at Downing Street working on her speech at the Lord Mayor of London's banquet on Monday when she is likely to

restate the government's attitude towards future developments in Europe.

The prime minister made no comment yesterday on the Conservatives' poor by-election results, although she discussed them on the telephone with the party chairman, Kenneth Baker. The Conservative candidate in Bradford North was pushed into third place by the Liberal Democrats as Labour increased its majority to 9,514. In Bootle, the Conservative held on to second place in a seat Labour held with a majority of 19,465.

Neil Kinnock hailed the Labour victories as giving the Tories "notice to quit", but Conservatives had been resigned to poor results and the voting figures had little of the political shock caused by the loss of Eastbourne last month.

Mr Baker said: "They are protest votes, certainly mid-term votes. Out there we are not very popular at the moment." The prime minister remained an asset to the party as she was a strong and determined leader, he said. A leadership contest would be unnecessary and was not wanted by the overwhelming majority of the party.

Cranley Onslow, chairman of the backbench 1922 committee, said: "This isn't some golf club where you can have a contest and it does not matter.

This is really a very important matter and it has to be taken seriously and people have to make serious decisions. This is not the time to fool around with the luxury of dissent."

But Derek Sawbridge, the Henley party vice-chairman, joined the local mayor, David Nimmitt Smith, in calling for Mr Heseltine to stand. Mr Sawbridge said: "I'd like to see it come to a leadership issue and I'd like him to win. He has more sense that the rest of the cabinet put together."

Mr Nimmitt Smith said: "I wish he would come out publicly and stand against her. That would clear it up once and for all."

Although the prime minister is not named in the Lords report, Lord Aldington said yesterday that just because Mrs Thatcher's views differed from those of the committee did not mean that the report should be consigned to the dustbin. "We have got to persuade people generally of what the Community is about and get rid of the bogies - the 'ogres', as Douglas Hurd (foreign secretary) described them - and the rather exciting visions of what the Community might develop into," he said.

The committee, which discussed EMU with Mr Hurd, Michael Heseltine and other British politicians, EC commissioners, MEPs, Robin Leigh-Pemberton, governor of the Bank of England, Herr Pöhl and businessman, called for Britain to exert more influence in the European debate by signing up wholeheartedly to the Community's agreed objectives.

The arguments about accession in the early 1970s have no place in the 1990s," it said. "The current debate should be conducted on the

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'No poll tax' for Gulf forces

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

MEMBERS of the armed forces serving in the Gulf should be exempted from paying the poll tax, the government said yesterday.

New guidelines issued by the environment department called on local authorities to give special treatment to servicemen with the British forces in the Gulf. The circular also urged councils not to levy the so-called standard community charge, which is double the personal rate, on the empty homes of civilians held hostage in Iraq and Kuwait.

Under current rules single servicemen who normally live in barracks are required to

continue paying the poll tax for 61 days after they are posted abroad. Married men and single people with their own homes have to pay the poll tax for the first six months of their overseas posting, after which the standard charge is levied on their property.

Although the existing rules, like yesterday's circular, have no legal force, they have been adopted widely by councils in England and Wales.

The new guidelines urge councils to consider sensitively all cases of people caught up in the Gulf emergency. The guidelines say that councils, in any case, should wait until servicemen return

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Grant planning to lead delegation to Baghdad

By ANDREW MC EWEN

THE government showed dismay bordering on anger with two Labour MPs yesterday when Tony Benn rejected its advice not to visit Iraq and Bernard Grant, left, said he would lead a separate delegation to Baghdad.

Mr Baker reacted with icy correctness, but ministers fear that the two MPs could give an impression that British public opinion is divided on Kuwait. Mr Hurd, the foreign secretary, fears that

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Rural Ireland grudgingly toasts its First Lady

By EDWARD GORMAN
IRISH AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

IRELAND yesterday formally elected Mary Robinson to be its first woman president, bringing congratulations from many but a certain amount of whimsical comment from rural bars, where female emancipation is not high on the list of priorities.

In the tiny hamlet of Ardagh, Co Meath, talk in Bennett's Bar was about stags and specifically about the one that got away in yesterday afternoon's hunt. To some, like Dannie Andrew, aged 31, the landlord, proudly wearing an Ireland World Cup jumper, Mrs Robinson just did not look right as president.

He was singing "Here's to you Mrs Robinson" between every pint he pulled, but he could not conceal his instinctive difficulty coming to terms

with a woman holding Ireland's highest elective office. "I don't know," he said, struggling to articulate what many outside Ireland would have said until this week were views which characterise the vast majority of men and women in rural areas of the country. "It's something in my head - it's just in my blood. I think the president should be a man and I don't agree with her views on abortion and homosexuality."

With a little prompting, he elaborated: "I'd just sooner she wasn't there. I mean, if you look at the television and you see the president coming out, you expect it to be a man with his wife sitting beside him - with a woman it leaves the man looking a bit spare, doesn't it? I don't like her attitude at all," he added. "She's very domineering, isn't she? She's got the

bit in her mouth hasn't she - the shaking fist - am I right?"

Mr Andrew would be a Fianna Fail or Fine Gael voter. Like many of them he suspects that his wife discreetly broke ranks to vote for a woman in spite of the fact that Mrs Robinson was backed by the Irish Labour party and the Marxist Workers' party. "She'd vote for whoever her mother told her to vote for," he said, "but don't be writing that or I'd be getting a divorce and I don't want a divorce, Mrs Robinson or not."

Those who would agree with him, and there were women among them in Bennett's, bear the new president no ill-will and appear happy to accept Mrs Robinson's democratic mandate.

Brian Beglan, who owns a clothing manufacturing business, was supervising a friend riding his horse, Big

Nancy. He did not vote for Mrs Robinson but he believes she will be readily accepted even by those who find her liberal views hard to take. "The fact that she was elected by a large women's vote will probably give a green light to all the ladies to get more involved in politics," he said.

Bettina McMahon, who described herself as a Liberal Democrat, delighted in a like-minded woman president who would make a change from Patrick Hillary, the present incumbent who, she said, spent most of his time improving his golf handicap. "With any luck her views will permeate right through society and can do nothing but good for Ireland," she said.

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Bill aims to create 'fairer' sentences

By QUENTIN COWDRY
HOME AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to make it easier for child abusers to be prosecuted were unveiled by the government yesterday, as part of a bill designed to improve the consistency and fairness of sentencing.

To the surprise of lawyers and judges, the bill contains almost all the recommendations of the 1989 Pigot review of the evidential rules governing child abuse cases. Ministers propose to scrap the "competence rules" which bar many children from giving evidence in such cases, and to allow courts to use routinely video-recorded evidence from child victims.

These measures, however, failed to prevent the bill receiving a more hostile reception than ministers had hoped. Opposition MPs, probation officers and penal reformers praised the emphasis that the bill placed on community penalties for non-violent offenders, but predicted that the proposals would, at best, only marginally reduce the jail population.

The Home Office hopes to reduce the number of thieves and burglars who are jailed by establishing new statutory sentencing guidelines, creating a broader, tougher range of community penalties and pressing courts to pay less attention to previous criminal records when sentencing.

Roy Hattersley, shadow home secretary, said that the government's new-found disengagement with jail as a punishment for most offenders was to be welcomed, but added that a big fall in the jail population would only be realised if ministers set up a sentencing council to ensure that courts needed the guidelines.

The bill failed to address the "scandal" of the large numbers of people held on remand in jail, often in appalling conditions, and the problem of reduced public confidence in the police and the legal system. He called for a strengthening of the Bail Act and the creation of a special tribunal to investigate alleged miscarriages of justice.

Mr Baker said he and Mrs Thatcher had spent much of their time discussing how best to "preserve and move forward the unprecedented international consensus". However, it is likely that they considered at what point the allied forces would be ready to undertake an offensive.

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My lips are sealed: Heseltine received his attack on the prime minister at a chamber of commerce lunch yesterday, but remained silent on a leadership challenge.

Baker reassured of allies' readiness to go to war

By ANDREW MC EWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

JAMES Baker, the US Secretary of State, appeared last night to have settled doubts about the willingness of the Western and Arab allies to use force if necessary to liberate Kuwait.

As he flew from London to Paris on the last leg of a tour of the Middle East and Europe, it became clear that while Moscow continued to call for a peaceful solution, it would not obstruct the allies if they decided to use force. Officials travelling with Mr Baker said that Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Arab forces, would fight alongside American and Western troops if it came to war.

Meanwhile, Sir Geoffrey Howe is working on a speech that he will deliver next week, explaining the reasons for his resignation, but his friends insisted again yesterday that he did not intend to stand against Mrs Thatcher.

Relations between Syria and France, although both have forces in the area, Mr Baker was expected to try to clarify the French view while in Paris before flying back to Washington today. He is likely to tell President Bush that the alliance can be considered reliable.

Margaret Thatcher again strongly reaffirmed Britain's readiness to join its allies in the use of force if necessary. Speaking outside Downing Street after talks with Mr Baker, she said: "Obviously our hopes are not justified." His remarks will have gratified Mr Baker, who was anxious to dispel an impression that Moscow and Peking might veto the use of force.

Mr Baker said he and Mrs Thatcher had spent much of their time discussing how best to "preserve and move forward the unprecedented international consensus". However, it is likely that they considered at what point the allied forces would be ready to undertake an offensive.

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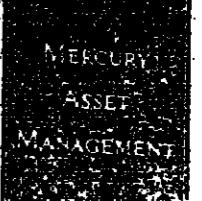
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Scooting off to school

Our magazine for young readers offers the chance to win one of 20 street scoots, a hot little number from California

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BP says it lost 4p on every gallon after Iraqi invasion

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

OIL company executives will tell a new enquiry by MPs that they lost 4p on every gallon of petrol sold in the last quarter, despite big rises at the pumps.

BP and Shell will be expected to justify huge increases in profits when they are called before the all-party Commons select committee on energy, in the third investigation this year into petrol pricing. BP's profits quadrupled to £822 million in the three months to September, while Shell's were up 70 per cent to £1.1 billion.

The profits caused an outcry among MPs, who accused the companies of profiteering at the expense of motorists. The price of petrol has risen by more than 30p a gallon during the Gulf emergency.

Oil industry executives, exasperated by constant criticism, say that the profits mask the true picture. Both companies say the figures included a large element of paper profits covering the value of oil stocks. With bulk oil prices

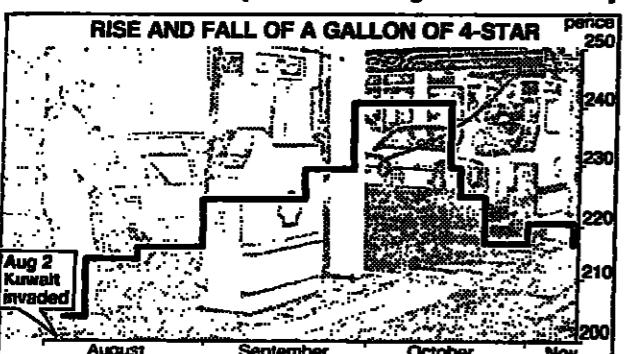
rising, the paper value of their stocks has also risen.

BP buys in 40 per cent of its oil, which means the company has had to replenish much of its supply in recent weeks at the higher bulk prices being charged because of the volatility in world markets. The company said that by failing to raise pump prices quickly when Kuwait was invaded, its losses on petrol amounted to an average 4p a gallon throughout the last quarter.

BP said: "These stock profits are meaningless in the cash sense. Our stocks are valued, but they have to be replaced at higher prices and are worthless until they are sold on. We also have to take the risk of buying and selling oil at the right price. The headline profit total does not tell the whole story."

Shell said: "The element of UK petrol sales is very small in comparison with Shell's worldwide business operating in 100 countries."

The arguments are unlikely



Sentence on mother delayed

A MOTHER who killed her four children is to be examined by a third psychiatrist after two others disagreed on how she should be treated, causing a judge yesterday to delay sentencing her.

Qi Tai Ngai, aged 33, has admitted strangling her children, aged between four months and five years, at their home in Basildon, Essex, on February 16, and claims grounds of diminished responsibility.

She is alleged to have been suffering from an acute psychotic illness when she committed the acts. However, two doctors cannot agree on how Mrs Ngai, aged 33, should be treated.

The case at Chelmsford was adjourned for sentencing until January. It was the third time sentencing had been delayed.

Children 'experimenting with drugs earlier'

By JOHN LEARY, HIGHER EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

CHILDREN are beginning to experiment with alcohol, tobacco and solvents at an earlier age, it was claimed yesterday at the launch of a range of advice packs for parents and primary schools.

The Skills for the Primary School Child programme also aims to protect children from drugs, bullying and child abuse, as well as addressing other health and safety issues. Funded by the education department, the initiative is being run by the Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drug Addiction and Re-Solv, a charity concerned with solvent abuse.

Children under 12 will be offered a programme of instruction to enable them to protect themselves. The project is thought to be the first national programme for the prevention of drug abuse among young children.

An average of two children a week are dying from solvent abuse, and the charity estimates that at least one child in 10 is involved in bullying, either as victim or perpetrator. Reported cases of child abuse are also rising.

Alan Howarth, a junior minister at the education department, said: "It is paramount that we do all we can to protect our children through health education. I hope that it continues to help our young people adopt healthy life styles and to resist the pressures to mis-use drugs."

The first stage of a borough's plan to link its secondary schools and colleges with local businesses to guarantee pupils' jobs was launched in Wandsworth, southwest

Robinson praises Ireland's women

By DAVID YOUNG

MARY Robinson, who became Ireland's first woman president last night, has praised the women of Ireland. She said that: "Instead of rocking the cradle, they rocked the system". Mrs Robinson, a barrister, was confirmed as president of the Irish Republic after the completion of a second count of votes cast in Wednesday's election under proportion

tional representation. She secured enough second preference vote transfers from Austin Currie, of Fine Gael, to ensure victory over Brian Lenihan of Fianna Fail. She described her campaign as "a barn storming, no-holds political battle between my ad hoc assembly of political activists, of idealists, of romantic realists."

She said: "We were up against the

might and the money of the greatest political party in this country and we beat them. I was elected by men and women of all parties and none, by many with great moral courage who stepped out from the faded flags of the civil war and voted for a new Ireland and above all, by the women of Ireland. Some people say that a politician's promises are worthless - well we shall see."

Raiders steal £1m Turner from flat

By STEWART TENDERL CORRESPONDENT

A TURNER painting worth £1 million and a work by the 18th century Venetian master Michele Marieschi have been stolen by a gang of thieves who bluffed their way into a London flat, attacked the owner and then cut the pictures from their frames.

Scotland Yard refused yesterday to name the owner of the paintings, a man aged 66 who was left bound, gagged and blindfolded. He was unharmed apart from a small cut to his neck.

Police have not so far linked the theft with any other art robberies. The gang knew exactly what they wanted to take, suggesting that they may have been robbing to order.

They stole a Turner entitled *Grand Junction Canal Southall Mill*, first shown in 1810, and *Venice with the Palazzo Pesaro* by Marieschi, which is estimated to be worth £250,000. The burglary took less than 15 minutes.

The gang struck at teatime on Thursday evening at Burton Court in Franklin's Row, Chelsea. Three men called at the outer door of the block of flats and rang the flat where the paintings were kept, saying they had a parcel to deliver. The paintings' owner them to contact the porter. The men got through the electronically-controlled outer doors without being seen by the porter, possibly entering the building with an unwitting resident. The gang donned masks and knocked at the door of their target.

The owner opened the door and was overwhelmed by the three. At one point he was threatened with a knife to the throat, he was tied up and the paintings were taken from their frames. They were then hidden inside an artist's portfolio case and the gang walked out. The flat owner, still tied, was found about 45 minutes later by his stepdaughter.

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Mr Tucker said his luggage was x-rayed but would have had no further checks. The Federal Aviation Authority had granted Pan Am a relaxation of strict rules for checking such bags.

Mr Kreindler asked if there was a requirement for any unaccompanied baggage, whatever its source, to be either physically searched or off-loaded. Mr Tucker said: "If it came to our attention

Security system unable to detect Lockerbie bomb

A BAG "slipped in" to Pan Am Flight 103 when it took off from Frankfurt could not have been spotted under the airline's baggage handling procedures at Heathrow, the Lockerbie enquiry heard yesterday.

Alan Tucker, the airline's Heathrow general manager, told the hearing in Dumfries that it had bagged the flight at Frankfurt and the passenger matched to that bag failed to join the onward leg from Heathrow to New York, it would have been searched or off-loaded at Heathrow. If, however, there was no passenger and the bag had been "slipped in" to the system at Frankfurt, the airline had no procedure for detecting it.

The disclosure came as Mr Tucker was being cross-examined by Lee Kreindler, the lawyer for American relatives of the disaster victims. Of the 270 who died in the bomb blast over Lockerbie, 188 were Americans.

Mr Tucker said baggage was classes as either "interline", belonging to passengers switching between airlines at a stage in their journey, or "online", passengers transferring between planes run by the same airline.

When Flight 103 took off from Frankfurt on December 21 1988, all baggage on the Boeing 727 that took passengers to London would have been classed as online at Heathrow for those continuing to New York on the Boeing 747 Maid of the Seas.

Mr Tucker said interline baggage at Heathrow would have been x-rayed but would have had no further checks. The Federal Aviation Authority had granted Pan Am a relaxation of strict rules for checking such bags.

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Butler and cook 'stole £1m silver'

A butler and a cook pleaded guilty yesterday to stealing £1 million worth of the family treasures of the Marchioness of Hartland.

Paul Bennett, aged 33, and Margaret Russell, aged 38, worked for seven weeks at the marchioness's country home, Aske Hall, near Richmond, North Yorkshire, and then vanished. Their haul included the 1770 Richmond Cup.

The couple, who previously ran a garage in Taunton, Somerset, admitted carrying out the theft between April and June when they appeared at Teesside crown court with David Smedley, aged 44, a dealer, of Tunbridge Wells, Kent, who denied handling the silver.

They also pleaded guilty to making false statements to obtain passports. Russell also admitted obtaining £10,000 by deception when she sold silver to another dealer.

The couple were remanded in custody and Smedley's £65,000 bail was continued. He was ordered to report twice a week to the police.

High lead levels

Levels of lead 1,000 times the legal limit were found in drinking water in Blackburn, Lancashire, it was disclosed yesterday. Some 15,000 houses could be affected. The local health authority fears children and pregnant women could be at risk from long-term exposure to lead in drinking water. The town is particularly affected because its soft water easily absorbs lead from the domestic pipes.

Jaguar stoppage

Jaguar stopped all production and laid off 2,000 assembly workers at its Coventry factory yesterday 24 hours after the workforce balloted to accept the company's pay package. The lay-offs were caused by a shortage of car body panels from Swindon. The company said that a further 500 would be laid off on Monday and Tuesday. The workers will, however, report back on Wednesday.

Sex bias award

Mrs Sally Lister, a teacher from Ulverston, Cumbria, was yesterday awarded £6,000 compensation by a Carlisle industrial tribunal which upheld her sex discrimination claim. She said she was not appointed deputy head of a department at Ulverston Victoria High School because the head of the department could not work with a woman, but the headmaster claimed she was not suitable for the job.

Acid in sewers

Valve failure on a storage tank led to 50 tonnes of sulphuric acid leaking into a sewer. Warrington crown court was told yesterday. Joseph Crossfield and son, part of Unilever, pleaded guilty to the discharge and was fined £5,000 with £600 costs. Last year it was fined £1,500 for a similar offence.

CORRECTIONS

In Thursday's appointments supplement an article about doctors abandoning medicine because of the hours and conditions was wrongly illustrated with a photograph of an unnamed doctor taken in a different context. We regret the error and any inconvenience caused to the doctor concerned.

The Times reported on October 20 that Hamerton and Fulham council considered withdrawing services from non-payers of the poll tax. The council says that it did not.

The Times overseas editions on November 22-23, 24-25, 28-29, 30-31, December 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26, 28-29, 31-32, January 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26, 28-29, 31-32, February 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30, March 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30, April 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 26-27, 33-34, May 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25, 31-32, June 7-8, 14-15, 21-22, 28-29, 31-32, July 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 26-27, 31-32, August 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, September 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, October 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25, 31-32, November 7-8, 14-15, 21-22, 28-29, December 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 26-27, January 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, February 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, March 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 26-27, 31-32, April 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, May 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, June 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, August 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, September 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, October 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, November 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, December 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, January 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, February 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, March 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, April 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, May 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, June 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, August 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, September 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, October 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, November 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, December 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, January 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, February 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, March 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, April 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, May 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, June 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, August 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, September 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, October 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, November 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, December 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, January 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, February 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, March 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, April 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, May 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, June 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, August 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, September 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, October 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, November 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, December 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, January 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, February 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, March 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, April 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, May 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, June 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, August 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, September 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, October 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, November 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, December 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, January 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, February 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, March 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, April 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31, May 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, 31-32, June 2-3, 9-10, 16

Race abuse soldier given right to claim compensation

THE army's decision to deny a black soldier compensation or any other form of redress after he suffered racial abuse was quashed in the High Court yesterday.

Two judges ruled that army investigations into former Private Stephen Anderson's complaint that he was punched, kicked and called "nigger" by fellow members of the Devon and Dorset Regiment were flawed. Lord Justice Taylor and Mr Justice Morland set out a series of guidelines to be followed by the Army Board of the Defence Council when it reconsiders the case.

Michael Day, chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, said: "I am delighted for Mr Anderson and delighted that the judgment seems to extend the scope to redress discrimination." Mr Anderson, aged 24, of Stratford-upon-Avon, said: "I don't know what to say."

The commission had backed the former private's application for judicial review, regarding it as an important test case to establish that serving members of the armed forces should not be treated less favourably than



Anderson: "gobsmacked" by High Court decision

Few recruits from ethnic minorities

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE case of former Private Stephen Anderson is not the first to make the army think about its policy on alleged racial discrimination.

The opinion, often professed at the staff colleges at Warminster and Camberley, is that since people who seek a career in the army reflect the prejudices of society as a whole, there will be personnel who have racist tendencies.

Cases of alleged racial discrimination in the armed forces – and in the police – have a greater impact in the public eye, however, than allegations arising in other parts of society. Racial abuse, like bullying, is perceived to be symptomatic of an underlying feature of service life.

The army says that it is only the negative cases that make the headlines and people from the ethnic minorities who are content with their careers have no reason to speak out.

Nevertheless, race has become an important issue for all three services in recent years. Not least because of the need in the government's eyes to attract more recruits from ethnic minorities. Since Asian and Afro-Caribbean immigration began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, few have applied to join the services.

A defence ministry report showed that in 1988, out of 21,135 applicants for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, only 1.4 per cent were from non-white groups. Out of 50,368 applicants for the army, 1.7 per cent were from ethnic minorities. In the case of the RAF, 1.5 per cent of the 17,242 applicants were from ethnic minorities.

In regions such as Wales, Scotland and the north of England, the number of such applicants was almost negligible. Fear of racial discrimination is not the only reason for the lack of recruits. In a survey carried out on behalf of the defence ministry, Peat Marwick McLintock management consultants, asked a

civilian in racial discrimination investigations. The Army Board had claimed it was not bound by the same rules as those which apply when civilians bring claims for compensation under the 1976 Race Relations Act.

The judges agreed that the board had a wider discretion over its own investigations, but that in Mr Anderson's case it had taken an approach which was "seriously defective". Mr Day said that the army had denied Mr Anderson

compensation under the 1976 Race Relations Act.

The judges agreed that the army had adopted an inflexible approach and failed to consider the request for an oral hearing on its merits.

Lord Justice Taylor said the Army Board had adopted an inflexible approach and failed to consider the request for an oral hearing on its merits.

A hearing did not necessarily have to be oral with cross-examination of witnesses in all cases. That was a matter for discretion of the board, provided that it acted fairly. The judges agreed with Mr Sedley that Mr Anderson was entitled to see all the documents put before the board – a right previously denied him by the army.

Lord Justice Taylor said: "Except where public interest immunity is established, I see no reason why... the board should consider material withheld from the complainant."

Mr Anderson, who joined the army in September 1983, was the only black soldier in his platoon. He was discharged on medical grounds because of flat feet in April 1988 after he alleged racial abuse had taken place in Berlin and at his regiment's home base at Bulford, Wiltshire. Two soldiers were subsequently disciplined.

The judge said Mr Anderson complained to his commanding officer, who refused redress, and then pursued the matter unsuccessfully to brigade and district level and eventually to the Army Board. In April 1987 he went absent without leave, blaming the abuse he had suffered for his actions. He was arrested the following September and was later court martialled.

Lord Justice Taylor criticised the two army board members for considering Mr Anderson's case separately and reaching their conclusions without ever meeting.



Southwell: among the Bar's high priests and regarded as one of its leading intellectual lights, he is more traditional than Mr Scrivener

Clash of styles in fight for Bar chair

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

BATTLE lines will be drawn at the annual general meeting of the Bar today when, in what is believed to be an unprecedented move, a formal challenge is made for the influential post of chairman of the 6,000-strong profession in England and Wales. It could mean the vote being put to a postal ballot of the whole Bar Council.

The challenge in the election is being made by Richard Southwell, QC, prime architect of the Bar's response to the government's legal reforms, who is opposing the election of Anthony Scrivener, QC, the deputy chairman, who is the deputy chairman. The candidates have contrasting styles: Mr Scrivener is relaxed and informal, while Mr Southwell is "in the oldest, highest tradition of the Bar".

Normally, deputy chairmen automatically get the chairmanship. Dissatisfaction in some quarters with Mr Scrivener in the role of deputy chairman has, however, led to the challenge.

One senior barrister said: "The challenge really is almost unheard of and very divisive. Although their policies are not that dissimilar, they are markedly different in style."

At the heart of the challenge is a view, as one QC put it, that "Tony Scrivener has not pulled his weight in the last year. He has spent a lot of time on cases, including a fair amount of time in Hong Kong. Also, some people feel



Covering her face with her hands, Karen Smith, aged 19, is being taken to the criminal court in Bangkok yesterday, where she pleaded guilty to drug smuggling charges. Miss Smith, from

Soilhill, West Midlands, was arrested with Patricia Cahill, aged 17, on July 18 last year, for possession of heroin. The sentence is expected to be given next month. Miss Cahill, who has

pledged not guilty, goes on trial next Tuesday in the juvenile court because she is aged 17.

Blair Gordon, page 12

Judge berates appeal court rulings

By GEOFF KING

A JUDGE at the Central Criminal Court yesterday strongly criticised the Court of Appeal for taking away what he described as the "authority and dignity" of trial judges by "disingenuously" reducing proper

judges who pass the sentences," he said.

"There are judges in the land who are conscientiously weighing up sentences in the interests of both the defendant and the public, and the sentences are being interfered with by the Court of Appeal in a way that takes away a good deal of the dignity and responsibility of the working judiciary."

• John Blafield, QC, an East Anglian circuit judge, since 1982, was yesterday sworn in as a High Court judge. Mr Justice Blafield, aged 58, who was called to the Bar of Lincoln's Inn in 1956, will sit in the Queen's Bench Division.

The inspectors concluded that while Rochdale had most of the elements for an efficient professional service, they were not being managed and co-ordinated properly. Among the report's 41 recommendations was the need for new procedures as a matter of urgency, more involvement of parents and children, and clarification of which cases should be referred to police.

Sue Emblett of Parents Against Injustice, a group in Rochdale campaigning for an enquiry into the conduct of the social services department, said: "The report confirms all our anxieties. I fear what is happening here could be happening all over the country."

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All your life you've dreamed of owning a sporty car. And now here you are face to face with the reality. The SXi.

Your eyes take in the sleek lines, pausing to note the deep set front fog lamps, the alloy wheels, the tinted glass, and at the back just the hint of a rear spoiler.

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And most important, a potent 1.8 fuel

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL



John Patten and David Waddington conferring at the criminal justice bill press conference yesterday

Child videos in court after study

By JAMIE DETTMER

THE decision by Home Office ministers to include in the criminal justice bill provisions for children to give evidence in sexual abuse and assault cases on video and through closed circuit television comes after a successful pilot project in 18 crown courts.

The Lord Chancellor's department, responding to concern about abuse cases collapsing because child witnesses were "freezing" when questioned in open court, sanctioned the experimental use of video evidence in January 1989.

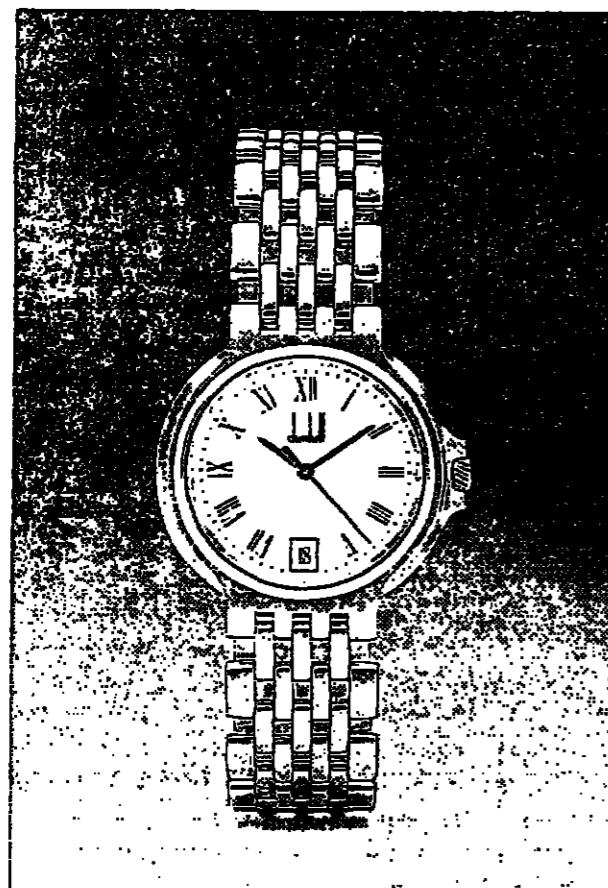
A change in the law, so that child victims of abuse need not give evidence in open court, was called for by an advisory committee chaired by Judge Pigot, QC, in December last year. The committee accepted that children were disturbed by giving evidence in open court and that the "overweening nature of court formalities made the experience harmful, oppressive and often traumatic".

The Pigot committee recommended that video re-

cordings of a child witness should be made before the trial in a preliminary hearing in informal surroundings, as that would give the court access to an important source of evidence.

Courts in the pilot project were already using pre-trial video evidence in abuse cases recorded by police officers and social workers. In September 1989, a father aged 50 was sentenced to eight years imprisonment after a court saw the video evidence of a girl aged six. The courts have also seen children being cross-examined through a live television link-up, as the witness gave evidence in a different room.

Before the experiment, children would often be screened from view when giving evidence in court, so that the defendants could not see them. In one case at the Central Criminal Court, a camera and screen was brought in to allow the defendants to see the children give evidence, while ensuring that the children could not see the defendants.



INDIVIDUALITY. A CLASSIC TIMEPIECE THAT REPRESENTS THE PINNACLE OF THE WATCHMAKERS' ART. THE STEEL AND YELLOW METAL ELITE, PART OF A COMPLETE RANGE OF WATCHES FROM ALFRED DUNHILL.



UNIT ALFRED DUNHILL IN LONDON, 11 DUKE STREET ST JAMES'S, THE FULHAM ARKANE, 5 SLOANE STREET AND AT ALFRED DUNHILL IN HARRODS AND SELFRIDGE'S MATCHES ALSO AT ALFRED DUNHILL WATCHES OF SWITZERLAND LTD, THE GOLDFINCH GROUP HARRODS WATCH DEPARTMENT AND LEADING JEWELLERS

Balanced package of reforms pledged

By QUENTIN COWDRY
HOME AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

GREATER consistency in sentencing, more successful prosecutions in child abuse cases and fewer jail terms for petty offenders were promised yesterday as the government published a criminal justice bill, widely seen as the most important for a generation.

David Waddington, the home secretary, said that the bill was a "balanced package" designed to satisfy the public's demands for exemplary penalties for criminals such as rapists, murderers and drug traffickers and the need for more property offenders to be saved from hardening and costly jail sentences.

The broad thrust of the bill – the extension of statutory sentencing guidelines, reform of the parole system and the introduction of a wider range of community penalties – was expected. There was one big surprise. The bill also contains measures, recommended by Judge Pigot, QC in a report a year ago, to make it easier to bring child abuse cases to court and to reduce stress on children giving evidence.

The decision raises the prospect of child abuse cases being transferred directly to crown court, avoiding committal proceedings; the routine use of video-recorded evidence from children in abuse trials; and an

Main points

- Creation of a more coherent sentencing framework and sharper differences in punishments between violent and non-violent offenders
- New statutory sentencing guidelines to cover most criminals
- A broader, more effective range of community penalties
- Introduction of "unit fine" system
- Changes in prisoner release rules so that all inmates spend longer in jail
- Penalties for parents who wilfully fail to control delinquent children
- Contracting out of court escort duties and the management, on a trial basis, of a remand centre
- Abolition of competence rules in child abuse cases and use of video-recorded evidence from child witnesses

end to courts questioning children before trials to test their competence as witnesses.

The bill seeks to achieve greater sentencing consistency by imposing new statutory guidelines on courts. With the exception of the most heinous

offences, the guidelines would allow imprisonment only if an offence was "so serious" as to rule out a community penalty or to protect the public from "serious harm". In addition, those deciding sentences would have to explain in court why jail was appropriate.

As expected, however, Mr Waddington, a former judge, has watered down his original proposal that courts should generally disregard previous convictions when sentencing. Faced by strong protests from judges and magistrates, he has decided that courts should be able to take into account the "circumstances" of past offenders. Relevant factors could be whether previous crimes involved violence or the threat of violence.

At a press conference yesterday, Mr Waddington denied suggestions that the sentencing criteria were too vague and that, under the new regime, courts would take previous convictions into account as much as they have done until now. Courts were highly skilled in weighing the relative seriousness of offences, he said. They needed to be encouraged to draw a greater distinction between violent and non-violent offenders when deciding punishments. Significantly, Mr Waddington damped expectations that the proposals would lead to a big fall



How a child witness is interviewed by television link

in Britain's high prison population. He considered the bill's main aim to be improving the consistency and fairness of sentencing, not easing jail overcrowding. "If the end result is a fall in the prison population ... I will be very glad, but that is not the prime objective," he said.

The drive to punish more property offenders outside jail is also reflected by the proposals for a wider, more demanding range of community penalties and fines that are closely based on ability to pay. Courts would be able to combine probation with community service, place more stringent demands on offenders sentenced to probation and impose curfews, restricting an offender to his home for up to 12 hours a day, enforced by electronic tagging.

A new "unit fine system" would mean that financial penalties would be tailored strictly to offenders' disposable incomes. Balancing such proposals, designed to be liberal in impact if not in rhetoric, are measures which

would mean that all prisoners would serve a greater proportion of their sentences in jail. "All inmates serving sentences longer than a year become eligible for parole, a discretionary process, after completing a third of their terms. Under the proposed regime, all inmates serving terms of four years or more would only be eligible for parole at the mid-sentence point. Remission, under which all sentences, save those for life prisoners, are automatically cut by a third, would be abolished."

Ministers, in spite of strong protests, have also pressed ahead with proposals to penalise parents who wilfully neglect delinquent children. They will also allow private security firms to escort prisoners to and from courts, an exercise that engages 2,200 police and prison officers each working day. Juvenile courts would be able to base fines on the means of the parent rather than the child and to bind parents over in the good behaviour of their offspring.

Other proposals include more flexible powers for the courts to deal with offenders aged 16 and 17; the abolition of jail terms for boys aged 14; and an exemption clause to allow courts to impose unusually long jail terms on persistently violent criminals.

Leading article, page 13

One in three people get cancer.

One in five die of it.

One in a hundred leave money to Cancer Research.

The Cancer Research Campaign is entirely dependent on voluntary contributions.

(Of every £1 we receive, 92p goes directly into research.)

And as a charity, we get the money left to us in wills free of tax.

So you can be sure that every penny you leave us is put to good use.

All too often, however, people don't get round to making a will at all.

(In such cases the law takes over. Your money and possessions do not necessarily go to the people you intended, and of course nothing goes to the Cancer Research Campaign or indeed any other charity.)

That's why we've produced a booklet explaining how to make a will. For a free copy, just fill in the coupon opposite.

Last year we helped to cure 90,000 people of cancer.

Every year we fund one third of the

research into cancer in the UK. And every year we make real progress in its prevention, detection and treatment.

With more funds we could make even more progress.

So please give us a mention in your will.

And help us to help the next generation in the fight against cancer.

Please send me a free copy of the Cancer Research Campaign leaflet on how to make my will.

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Send to: Cancer Research Campaign, FREEPOST, 2 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1V 5TY.

 Cancer Research Campaign

Fighting cancer on all fronts.

Scientists 'build' antibody to fight infectious disease

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

BRITISH scientists have produced the first custom-built human antibody that can be used to treat an infectious disease.

The antibody is effective in mice against the virus that is the main cause of respiratory infections in young children and may also cause up to half of Britain's 2,000 cot deaths every year. The new treatment is expected to go on clinical trial in human patients soon.

Bill Harris, managing director of Scogen and professor of genetics at Aberdeen university, said yesterday that he hoped a single dose of the antibody would be sufficient to cure those infected with the virus, known as RSV (respiratory syncytial virus). The virus, which is similar to that causing influenza, is the single largest cause of respiratory infections in children admitted to hospital and causes annual epidemics of bronchiolitis and pneumonia throughout the world.

Serious infections with RSV can be fatal or lead to lung damage. Professor Harris says that in the United States the virus is believed to be responsible for up to 10,000 deaths a

year, no comparable figures exist for Britain, partly because the virus is difficult to detect.

Scogen, a small company established by Professor Harris and other leading British experts in genetic engineering, used a technique developed at the Medical Research Council's molecular biology laboratory in Cambridge for producing large quantities of antibodies. Such antibodies are in principle the ideal way of helping the body defeat attacks by viruses, which cannot be eliminated by conventional drugs such as antibiotics.

The problem has been producing human antibodies in sufficient amounts. The Scogen method, discovered by Dr Greg Winter at Cambridge, consists of starting with mouse antibodies, and "humanising" them by genetic and protein engineering so that they can be given to human patients without being recognised as foreign material and rejected. Mouse antibodies can be produced in sufficient amounts by infecting mice repeatedly with RSV and harvesting the antibodies

produced, a process that would not be ethically acceptable in humans.

The antibodies finally produced are a blend of human and mouse elements. "They are 95 per cent human," Professor Harris says. So far they have not been tested on humans, but a single dose has proved sufficient to cure infected mice, even when the RSV had been given four days to establish itself before treatment.

Professor Harris says that the antibodies will work as both a prophylactic against infection and as a treatment. The first clinical trials will be carried out on volunteers as soon as a collaborating hospital has been identified.

Dick van Velzen, professor of foetal and infant pathology at the Royal Liverpool children's hospital, welcomed the development, but although he believes that up to 1,000 cot deaths a year in Britain can also be attributed to RSV, he doubts that the antibody can do much to help. Babies who die suddenly in their cots often show no previous symptoms of infection, so they would not have been treated.

Ship shape: 3rd officer Tanya Luffman, who found herself far too busy to socialise on the month's voyage

By BILL FROST

SEVENTEEN Wrens, the first to serve on a frontline warship, began a welcome weekend's leave yesterday after a month at sea cheek by jowl with the 240 male crew of the frigate HMS Brilliant.

The Brilliant docked in the Pool of London yesterday

morning where she will remain until Monday. Her crew will then rejoin the vessel and sail to Devonport. The Wrens seemed to be none the worse for their voyage, although some admitted to bouts of sea-sickness during a gale last week. "We had a couple of bumpy days

and it was difficult trying to shower as the water slopped out of the cubicle," said Jan Whittle, aged 29, from Coventry. Storms of a different kind had greeted the announcement that the Wrens were putting to sea at all. Anxious navy wives said that their husbands and boyfriends could become involved in shipboard romance. "Absolute rubbish. We are far too busy to socialise," said 3rd officer Tanya Luffman, aged 19, from Cardiff. Melanie Sharp, aged 23, agreed: "After an 18-hour day in rough weather we would far sooner go to our own mess deck for some女人's talk."

Joanne Mason, aged 26, from St Austell, Cornwall, said that her husband had been doubtful about her joining the crew. She had no complaints, however, about the way she was treated by her male shipmates. "It has all been a good laugh. The lads would like us to take a saucer of milk out to the Seacat, but naturally we know it's a missile."

Leading radio operator John Hickman said: "A couple of the older guys were a bit uncomfortable about having women aboard a warship. But they need not have worried. The girls pitched in and they are just like us now... well, almost."

Captain Richard Cobbold said that any reservations he had harboured were soon dispelled. He even said that one of the Wrens, 3rd officer Alison Traherne, could end up commanding her own warship, or even as First Sea Lord. Praise indeed, and from a man, too.

Murder charge

A woman is to face for the second time a charge of murdering her 10-month-old nephew. Wakefield magistrates had ordered a charge that Anima Karim, aged 52, murdered her nephew Sumair Zahoor be scrapped because there was no case to answer. However, Mr Justice O'Gorman granted an application by the Crown Prosecution Service yesterday effectively reinstating charges of murder.

Anglican-Catholic talks to move on

By ROBIN GEDWELL, RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS REPORTER

FALKS between the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches will take a big step forward next year with the publication of a long-awaited document which the Vatican has been accused of suppressing, it was disclosed yesterday.

The document is likely to confirm that the issue of the ordination of women could be a serious handicap in Catholic recognition of Anglican orders. A senior Vatican figure said that the Catholic church would shortly publish its response to the joint theological statement of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II). The response, expected at the end of 1988, had not been suppressed, but was delayed

because of the wide consultation needed, the Vatican said last night.

Recognition that Anglican priests were, in Catholic eyes, validly ordained would be a big breakthrough in the relations between the two churches.

The issue of priestly ministry is on the agenda of ARCIC II, but the second commission needs the Vatican's response to the statements of its predecessor to proceed further.

In the meantime, the Church of England has moved closer towards ordaining women as priests. The newly-elected General Synod, which meets for the first time next week, will probably decide on the 'Ordination of Women Measure' in 1992. The first woman bishop was consecrated in America in 1988.

Archbishop Edward Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, has said that the ordination of women had created a 'major difficulty' between Rome and Canterbury. Last night, he added, that this would be reflected in the official reply to ARCIC I.

Dr George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury designate, has said that he favours closer relations with Rome and that he supports the ordination of women to the priesthood.

Wallabies escape as bird stolen from zoo

By NICHOLAS WATT

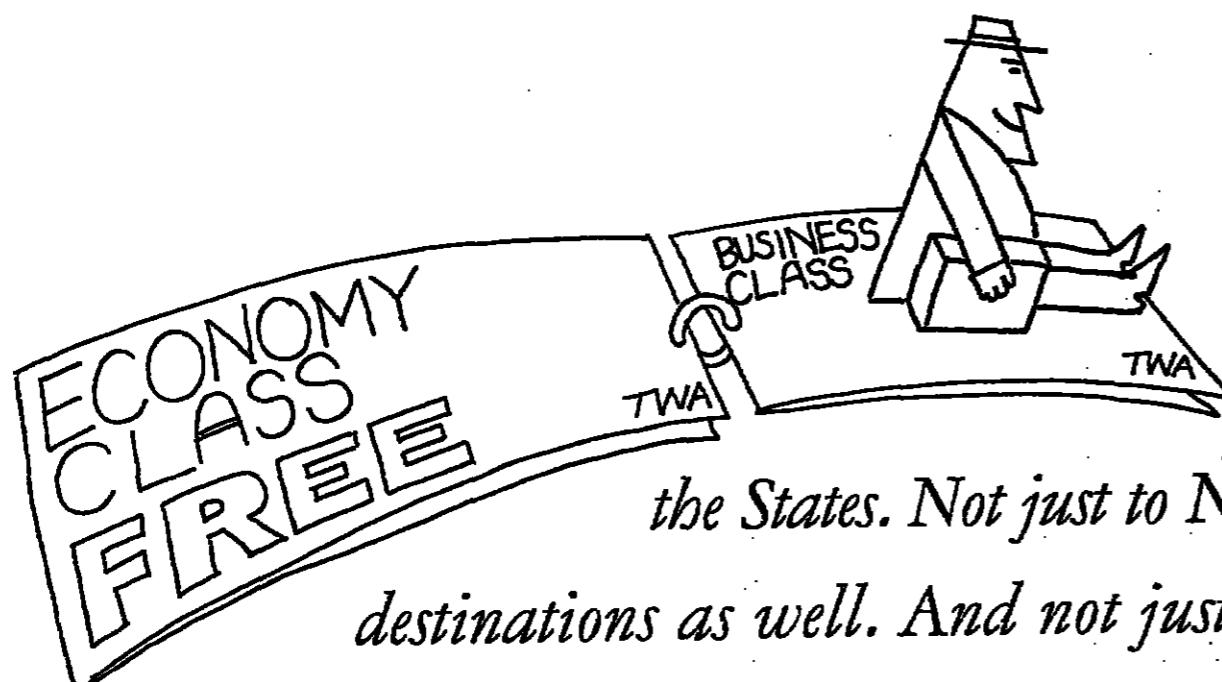
A GROUP of wallabies escaped yesterday from their cage at Whipsnade wild animal park, Bedfordshire, after thieves cut through fencing to steal a rare scarlet macaw.

By last night zoo keepers had recaptured two of the albino wallabies, which are part of Britain's only breeding colony.

The theft of the macaw, called Jessie, is believed to be part of a multi-million-pound black market in rare birds that is threatening the survival of the 'pennatine' species, that includes parrots and the macaw. Jessie was only one of four at the park and the second to be stolen in less than a year.

Richard Koch, the park's curator, said the macaw was

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Drug case decision deferred

A decision on whether 2,500 former tranquilliser users can sue the drug companies which they claim turned them into addicts, was deferred by Mr Justice Kennedy at Bristol crown court yesterday.

Paul Balan, one of the solicitors representing the former addicts, said: "We are very pleased. The co-ordinating arrangements are now in place." It is understood that the judge will announce his decision next week.

The group, represented by 547 solicitors, want compensation from two companies that produce benzodiazepines, the British Wyeth Laboratories, which makes the drug under the name of Ativan, and the Swiss-owned Roche Products, which makes Valium. If successful, the subsequent case would be the largest personal injuries action to be launched in England.

Bombing checks

Irish police are investigating the possibility of links between an IRA 'proxy' bombing and the arrest of six men just across the border after the explosion in which five soldiers and a civilian died on October 24 at a checkpoint outside Londonderry. The IRA forced a man to drive a car to the checkpoint which was packed with 750lb of explosives.

Shipyard cuts

More than 300 jobs are to be lost at the Cammell Laird shipyard in Merseyside, it was announced yesterday, as orders for three Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarines have been completed. VSEL, the owner, announced last month that it was looking for a buyer for the Birkenhead yard, but it would have to close if one could not be found. The 309 jobs are likely to disappear in the new year.

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Carey: in favour of closer relations with Rome

Battle lines drawn as Scots prepare for Paisley by-elections

By KERRY GILL

FORTY years of control over local politics in Paisley is unlikely to do the Labour party any good in the by-elections at Paisley North and South at the end of this month.

Labour's majorities of 14,442 and 15,785 respectively look certain to be badly mauled if not toppled by the Scottish National Party candidates. An early poll of the constituencies has shown that Labour is already facing defections. The survey found that for

every three Labour sympathisers, five were planning to vote for the nationalists. There is talk of another Govan, where two years ago the nationalists overthrew a Labour majority of more than 19,000 to win.

Michael Hirst, president of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Association, said that the nationalists appeared to have the upper hand. "What our work shows is that there is nervousness on the part of the Labour party." He also acknowledged that Paisley could turn into another Govan.

"It could be. Our target is to perform respectively."

The two-horse race between Labour and the nationalists will be decided on local issues such as housing, unemployment, the poll tax and blunders by the district council, including the £1.3 million to a building contractor who later went bankrupt without compensation work.

Gordon McMaster, Labour candidate for Paisley South, is the former leader of Renfrew district council. Yesterday he said that the council officers who had

been responsible for the payment had been disciplined and that the auditor had subsequently reported that proper council procedures had been in place.

Donald Dewar, Labour's spokesman on Scotland, has turned his attention to the announcement this week that the Clydesdale tube works in Bellshill, Lanarkshire is to close with the loss of 1,200 jobs. He said that there was a strong case for the retention of a Scottish steel industry, and that all options to save it remained open.

Iain Lawson, the nationalist can-

didate for Paisley South and the party's spokesman on steel and industry, said that British Steel had given guarantees at the time of privatisation, promising to consider the sale of Scottish assets they no longer needed. Mr Lawson urged Malcolm Rifkind, the Scottish secretary, to win cabinet approval to call in the guarantees within seven days.

"This announcement showed the total contempt with which we are treated by London," Mr Lawson said. "The only solution is Scottish control of our own affairs, with an independent

Scottish steel industry and an independent Scottish parliament within the European Community."

General election 1987

Paisley North: Adams (Lab), 20,193; McCartin (SDP/All), 5,731; Laing (C), 5,741; Taylor (SNP), 4,696.

Lab majority: 14,442.

Paisley South: Buchan (Lab), 21,611; Carmichael (L/All), 5,826; Williamson (C), 5,644; Mitchell (SNP), 5,398.

Lab majority: 15,785.

Tory post-mortem after lacklustre poll performances

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CONSERVATIVE party officials will hold a review into all aspects of the organisation's lacklustre by-election campaign in Bradford North, where the government took third place behind the Liberal Democrats.

Although Joy Atkin was a nervous and hesitant candidate, she faced other obstacles that would have defeated even the strongest candidate. The campaign in the marginal seat took place against a strong Labour lead in the opinion polls, nationally and with the high interest and mortgage rates making the Conservatives deeply unpopular among their own supporters.

The last week of her campaign, however, was dominated by what Kenneth Baker described as "noises off", the resignation of Sir Geoffrey Howe and Michael Heseltine's letter criticising the prime minister's style of leadership.

While the seat was nominally a marginal, the Conservatives had held it from 1983-87 only in the exceptional circumstances caused by Labour's internal problems. In 1983 Ben Ford, the former MP, had been deselected but stood as an independent, split the Labour vote and brought victory for the Tories. Four years later Pat Wall, Labour's hard left candidate, helped the Conservatives come within

1,633 votes of retaining the seat.

Such mistake was made by Labour in its choice of candidate for the by-election. Terry Rooney, a cautious, down Kinnockite, had strong local roots as deputy leader of Bradford metropolitan council and credentials for helping to remove the Militant influence from the local party. He also had the backing of a campaigning team which was far superior to that provided for Miss Atkin.

Having ruled out changes to the by-election candidates are chosen, the Tories' post mortem into their defeat will concentrate on how the party's by-election campaigning can be strengthened. Campaign literature has already been improved and candidates are likely to be given more extensive media training to help them to handle the intense press attention peculiar to by-elections.

Miss Atkin's limitations were cruelly exposed during the daily press conference when, in addition to her nervousness, she at times had difficulty answering questions on government policies. Her campaign was launched with out a cabinet minister in attendance and election leaflets showed her posing in a graveyard. She was also ill at ease when canvassing.

In the Bootle by-election in May the Conservatives had come within 41 votes of being pushed into third place.

• William Hill, the bookmakers, have lengthened the Tories' odds of winning the next general election from 6/5 to 5/4, the party's longest odds since Mrs Thatcher came to power. Labour's odds shortened to 4/7 from 3/13, is now reckoned to have its best chance of victory at any time since Mr Kinnock became leader.

William Hill says, however, that people still believe Mrs Thatcher will lead the Conservatives into the next election.

John Curtice, page 12

How the Tories elect their leader

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ANY contest for the leadership of the Conservative party must begin within 28 days of the opening of Parliament, with the arrangements being agreed between the leader and the chairman of the 1922 backbench committee.

Margaret Thatcher and Cranley Onslow exercised their prerogative to fix a date within the 28-day period when they agreed a timetable last Tuesday. Nominations close on Thursday and if there is a contest, voting takes place the following Tuesday.

Under rules changed after last year's challenge by Sir Anthony Meyer, the names of the proposers and seconders of candidates are published.

Mrs Thatcher has been proposed by Douglas Hurd and seconded by John Major.

Conservative MPs would cast their vote by secret ballot in a Commons committee room. Mr Onslow is to ask Sir Bernard Braine, the father of the House, Sir Michael Shaw and Dame Janet Fookes to act as scrutineers if necessary, a task they carried out last year. Then, voting took place be-

tween 10am and 6pm with Mr Onslow announcing the result at 6.25pm. If there is a contest on November 22, he is considering reducing the voting time.

To win on the first round, a candidate must obtain an overall majority plus 15 per cent more votes than the runner-up. If that did not happen, a second ballot would take place on November 27, with nominations closing on Thursday November 22. Nominations of candidates from the first ballot become void and other candidates can enter the fray. On the second ballot, a candidate must obtain an overall majority for victory.

If necessary, a third ballot between the three highest placed candidates would take place on November 29. Voting then would be on a preference basis. If no overall majority is gained, the bottom candidate is eliminated and their supporters' second choices redistributed between the remaining two. The candidate with the overall majority is elected leader.

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The report, by Professor Ken Young, of London university, and Mary Davies, of the Institute of Local Government Studies at Birmingham university, found that almost three-quarters of councils were dominated by party politics.

A study of 407 local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, found that most important decisions were taken in private political group sessions at which councillors were told how they should vote at public council and committee meetings.

So formalised had the position become that in half of all councils the chief executive officer now attended meetings of the ruling political group to advise on policy. The result was that meetings

attended by the public were rendered virtually meaningless because the outcome of every debate had already been decided behind closed doors.

The report, by Professor Ken Young, of London university, and Mary Davies, of the Institute of Local Government Studies at Birmingham university, found that almost three-quarters of councils were dominated by party politics.

"Partisan conduct is rapidly becoming commonplace with members of both major parties increasingly bound by group decisions and with more consistently partisan voting in both council and committee meetings," the report said. While Labour councils remained more politically partisan than those under Tory control, figures showed that Conservatives were rapidly catching up.

The study was undertaken to examine



Smiles ahead: Terry Rooney celebrates with supporters yesterday after his convincing win for Labour in the Bradford North by-election

Northern MPs at risk after 22.8% swing

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Bradford result and the 22.8 per cent decline in the Conservative share of the vote will have sent shivers down the spines of some northern Tory MPs. A movement of votes on a similar scale at the next election would mean the defeat of Lynda Chalker, the overseas aid minister, Michael Fallon, the education minister and Peter Morrison, the prime minister's parliamentary private secretary. Tom Sackville, the Tory whip, is another who would face defeat on a swing of less than 3 per cent and so is David Trippier, minister of state at the environment department and the Conservative deputy chairman in charge of organisation in marginal seats.

On the basis of voting figures at the 1987 general election, the following Conservative-held seats in northern England (Scottish seats are not included) would fall to Labour at the next general election on a national swing from Conservative to Labour of 5 per cent or less:

Seat	Swing MP	% Swing needed	1987 C majority over Lab	Votes % and party in 3rd place
York	C Gregory	0.1	147	9,898 15.9 SDP/PA
Walsall	Mrs L Chalker	0.25	279	8,388 15.5 SDP/PA
Bolton NE	P Thurnham	0.85	813	6,080 13.0 SDP/PA
Lancashire W	K Hind	1.1	1,353	8,972 14.8 SDP/PA
Bedf & Spen	Mrs E Peacock	1.15	1,382	8,372 14.3 SDP/PA
Ellesmere Pt & Neston	M Woodcock	1.6	1,853	8,143 14.1 SDP/PA
Langsborough	R Holt	1.65	2,068	12,405 19.2 L/All
Tynemouth	N Trotter	2.2	2,583	10,444 18.0 L/All
Hyndburn	K Hargreaves	2.3	2,220	7,428 15.2 SDP/PA
Darlington	M Nixon	2.5	2,361	8,430 11.8 SDP/PA
Barrow	J Lee	2.55	2,086	12,290 19.7 L/All
Barry South	D Sumberg	2.5	2,578	8,772 13.1 SDP/PA
Stockport	T Fevill	3.05	2,853	10,365 22.1 SDP/PA
Warrington S	C Butler	3.05	3,609	13,112 22.2 L/All
Furness	C Franks	3.6	3,928	7,799 14.2 SDP/PA
Bolton W	T Sackville	4.1	4,583	10,933 18.5 SDP/PA
Rossdale and Darwen				
Chester	D Trippier	4.15	4,962	9,097 15.1 L/All
Emm Lane	P Morrison	4.6	4,855	10,265 19.5 L/All
St Helens	S Bates	4.9	5,266	8,755 16.0 SDP/PA

These seats would fall on a swing of between 5 and 10 per cent, seeing the disappearance from the Commons of sports minister Robert Atkins and Alistair Burt, PPS to the party chairman.

Colder Valley D Thompson 5.1 6,045 13,761 23.1 L/All

Keyley G Water 5.35 5,608 10,041 19.2 L/All

Askrill A 6.15 6,000 12,124 21.7 L/All

Chesley D Dover 6.55 6,057 10,705 19.1 L/All

South Ribble R Atkins 7.05 8,430 11,745 19.7 L/All

Lancaster E Keeler-Bowman 7.1 6,453 9,003 19.8 L/All

Blackpool S P Blaikie 7.95 6,744 8,405 19.8 SDP/PA

St Helens W Church 8.1 8,199 11,637 23.0 L/All

Stockport N M MacCormick 8.5 7,321 9,032 21.0 L/All

These Conservative-held Northern seats would be in danger if there were a swing of 5 per cent or less from Conservatives to Liberal Democrats, posing a threat to Conservative vice-chairman Sir Tom Arnold, whip Timothy Kirkhope and Keithy Hampson, chief aide to Michael Heseltine.

Seat % swing needed 1987 C majority over Lab votes % and party in 3rd place

Seat	% swing needed	1987 C majority over Lab	votes % and party in 3rd place
Stockton S	0.65	774	18,600 31.3 L/All
Cole Valley	0.85	5,608	11,922 17.9 L/All
Hazel Grove	1.5	1,677	76,553 25.1 SDP/PA
Sir St. Arnold	1.7	1,840	6,354 17.8

These Conservative seats would fall to a five per cent to ten per cent swing to Liberal Democrats.

Leeds NW 5.05 5,921 11,210 21.7

Croft 5.1 6,933 11,922 17.9

Pudsey 5.75 6,435 11,481 20.5

Lincolnsborough & Saddleworth 6.05 6,502 13,293 26.0

Shiremoor, Halam 6.9 7,537 11,290 20.4

Redcar 7.25 7,989 9,810 17.9

Redcar 7.4 7,940 5,940 8.1

Redcar 8.05 8,419 12,292 25.3

Heslau 8.95 8,088 8,103 18.0

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Leeds NE 8.65 8,088 8,103 18.0

Hesl

Past rituals usher in an emperor for the 21st century

FROM JOANNA PITTMAN IN TOKYO

MOTOBUMI Higashizono counts himself lucky to have been intimate acquainted with two emperors of Japan. Companion since the age of three to the late Emperor Hirohito, he is now friend and mentor to Hirohito's son, Akihito, aged 56, who succeeded to the Chrysanthemum Throne in January 1989.

As the palace's chief ritualist, Mr Higashizono will direct operations at Monday's enthronement ceremony. And at the Daijōsai — the great food offering ceremony — on November 22, it will be his job to summon the gods of Japan and then kneel on guard while Emperor Akihito communes alone with Amaterasu Omikami, the sun goddess and legendary mother of Japan.

"The Emperor has not rehearsed his role very much. He will share some sake with the gods and then lie down in the dark with Amaterasu. I am rather afraid that he'll go and knock something over," he said with a twinkle in his eye.

Mr Higashizono, a spy gentleman in his seventies who was born into a high-ranking aristocratic family from Sendai in northern Japan, is a well-connected figure at court. He is married to Princess Sawa (granddaughter of the late Emperor Meiji, who reigned from 1867 to 1912) and is one of the most senior officers of the powerful imperial household agency, or Kunaicho, the rotweiller that zealously guards Japan's imperial family.

The primary function of this august body, as impenetrable as the palace itself, is to maintain the opaque veil of mystique that surrounds the throne. It also administers an imperial etiquette so arcane that its origins are

lost in the mists of early history.

While Mr Higashizono remains characteristically silent on his own background, he is surprisingly effusive about his friend and protégé, the emperor. "His day-to-day lifestyle has changed very little from that of the Emperor Showa. He still, for example, has all his food checked by poison tasters. I remember during the years of rationing after the war, he used to get very upset at always having to give up part of his meal to the poison taster," he said.

All his life, Emperor Akihito has been carefully protected. As a boy he travelled everywhere in a special Mercedes-Benz, an armoured plated vehicle with windows three inches thick. "It weighed four tons and all wooden bridges had to be tested before the car could cross them," recalled Mr Higashizono.

Today the emperor is driven around in a custom-built bullet-proof limousine, but this year for the first time he was allowed to travel in an ordinary car. "He made a special request to go in a Nissan on a trip to Hokkaido. The police were furious but we decided to allow it, just this once." Even this has caused complications. In order to maintain harmony between Japan's three giant car manufacturers, the palace garage now houses a Honda and a Toyota as well as the Nissan.

When Emperor Akihito is on view to the people, he is kept on a tight reign by his minders at the Kunaicho. His behaviour is strictly controlled — the display of emotion or informality is forbidden, smiles and waves are rationed and the rare words he utters in public must be pre-rehearsed. According to Mr Higa-

shizono, the emperor greatly envies the ability of Britain's royal family to tour among the people, express opinions publicly, go shopping and even handle money — activities all forbidden to him.

After a trip to Britain in 1953 to attend Queen Elizabeth's coronation, the 19-year-old Crown Prince Akihito returned full of new ideas. "He picked up all sorts of habits from the British," recalled Mr Higashizono. "That's where, for example, he learned to wear his shoes inside the palace apartments. We've explained to him that this is not hygienic, but he is adamant."

And again having carefully noted the set-up at Buckingham Palace, Akihito has rejected the traditional Japanese fashion in favour of Western beds and had a shower installed in the imperial boudoir.

But in his efforts to keep up with the Windsors, Emperor Akihito may have to reconsider his new arrangements. According to Mr Higashizono, the Duke of Edinburgh, on a recent trip to Japan, requested a futon rather than a bed; and Princess Anne insisted on using a Japanese bath while in Tokyo earlier this year.

Since ascending the throne, Emperor Akihito has let it be known that he wants to be in closer contact with the people, along the lines of the British monarchy. He has a long way to go. As yet he is still forbIDDEN to drive his own car, let alone fight alongside his countrymen as Prince Andrew did during the Falklands conflict.

His most daring request to date has been for his limousine to be allowed to stop at red traffic lights, like ordinary cars. "The first time we allowed him to do this, half the procession got cut off and he was ten minutes



Chrysanthemum sovereigns: the late Emperor Hirohito and the 14-year-old Crown Prince Akihito, watching an athletics meeting in April 1947 with members of the imperial household.

late for a ceremony at Ueno," recalled Mr Higashizono, who was obviously unamused at the fiasco. This should not happen again. Rumour has it that Emperor Akihito's chauffeur now has a high-tech gadget that can change a traffic light from red to green at the flick of a switch.

While the emperor's early trip to Britain gave him an appetite for freedom, it did little for his academic career.

The emperor did not complete his course at Gakushuin University where he was studying political science and economics," said Mr Higashizono. "I think he had too much fun abroad just at the beginning of his studies," he added with a chuckle.

But his years at university were not wasted. They gave him what no other emperor of Japan has ever had: friends. These days he is

allowed to invite his classmates to the palace for an occasional game of tennis. And when they feel like a game of polo, they only have to step on to the emperor's own indoor polo pitch, inside the palace grounds.

Emperor Akihito's other hobby, said Mr Higashizono, is cooking. The palace kitchens are abundantly staffed by specialist chefs — among others, there is one who does nothing but make

Tokyo 'in dolphin killings cover-up'

From JOSEPH IN TOKYO

CONFICTING reports on how nearly 600 dolphins met their death on a remote Japanese beach have fed speculation that the government here may be helping to cover up events which it fears will infuriate wildlife protection groups.

The government, contradicting initial Japanese press reports that the killings last weekend were orchestrated by local fishermen and that the dolphins were clubbed and slaughtered for their meat, now says it is sure that it was a case of mass suicide. Indeed, the fishermen were trying to help the dolphins back into the sea at the island of Fukue in the East China Sea, off Nagasaki.

Yesterday, a government spokesman said that a post-mortem examination on four of the dolphins found parasites in their ears, which may have confused their sense of direction.

The British press, which reported the affair prominently, has been accused of "Japan-bashing" and of inventing that the dolphins were deliberately driven on to the beach. However, the British reports were based on dispatches from the Nagasaki office of Kyodo, the national Japanese news agency.

Japan is anxious to prevent a replay of an incident that brought it worldwide condemnation in 1978, when fishermen on Iki island, close to last Saturday's beaching, slaughtered about 1,600 dolphins to protect their fishing grounds. The government is now spearheading a campaign to deny and discredit the grim initial dispatches about last weekend's events.

Marchers call for Lukyanov to resign

Sweet revenge of Delhi 'wrecker'

From CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

CHANDRA Shekhar has spent 11 months preoccupied with toppling the outgoing prime minister, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, who outwitted him for the job in a last-minute backroom deal with party stalwarts last December. His determination to undermine Mr Singh has been a personal crusade, and it will be sweet revenge when he is sworn in as India's eighth prime minister today. He has been described as a "wrecker" because of his hostile political tactics, which at times have been bizarre. In April a national magazine emblazoned its front cover with the words "They have tapped all my

phones. Not just that, they have bugged even the rooms." The Indian press in the 1960s labelled him the angry young Turk of politics because of his firebrand socialism. After moving to the Congress party from a socialist party in the mid-1960s, he became Indira Gandhi's strongest in the Rajya Sabha (upper house). He built a reputation on his strident demands for rapid social change to help the down-trodden. He sided with Mrs Gandhi when Congress split in 1969 and supported her in the nationalisation of banks and the abolition of privy purses.

But the close relationship eventually collapsed. On the eve of the emergency in 1975, he criticised Mrs Gandhi and went to prison until 1977, when he fought in the March elections and won a seat in the Lok Sabha (lower house). He eventually became president of the old Janata Party, which was subsumed in 1988 into the present Janata Dal.

Mr Chandra Shekhar, aged 63, married with two sons, has always refused a government post, but has a reputation for good organisation. Soon after Mr Singh was propelled into the prime ministership, he established himself as a fierce critic, declaring "I can never accept him as my leader." He says that every crisis encountered by the Singh government could have been avoided or sorted out.

Democracy vow Kathmandu — King Birendra yesterday proclaimed a new constitution for Nepal restoring multiparty democracy and stripping him of his absolute power. "This constitution has clearly guaranteed personal freedom and human rights," the king said in a broadcast three-minute speech at the Royal Palace. (Reuters)

Post pillaged

Gatumba, Rwanda — Rwandan Patriotic Front rebels pillaged the strategic Gatumba post on the Ugandan border before it was recaptured by Rwandan government troops. The attack appeared to be part of a new strategy of sabotage raids. The rebels ransacked the customs offices and set fire to eight food-laden lorries. (AFP)

New ruler

Maseru — Prince Sesiba Moholo, aged 27, will be installed as Lesotho's king next Monday in place of the deposed King Moshoeshoe II, his exiled father, Major-General Justin Lekhanya, the military ruler since seizing power in 1986. (Reuters)

Nurses strike

Tokyo — About 100,000 nurses joined a nationwide 24-hour protest strike against the long hours and overwork that they claim jeopardise their babies during pregnancy and cause many to leave the profession. (AP)

Killer snake

Jakarta — A 20ft python killed an Indonesian woman and, finding her indigestible, ate her baby, aged five months, the *Kompas* daily reported. Villagers in Sumatra told the paper that the woman was found by her husband, crushed to death and with bite-marks running from ankle to waist. Her baby was missing. Acting on the advice of a local mystic, villagers found the snake, with the child's body inside. (Reuters)



Chandra Shekhar greeting Delhi colleagues yesterday

Leader's mission to stall election

From OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT IN DELHI

CHANDRA Shekhar, leader of a small political faction in which Rajiv Gandhi refused to take over the reins of government a few days ago, will be sworn in today as prime minister of a vulnerable minority Indian government created with the sole objective of stalling the next general election for perhaps three or four months.

The president told him that he must face a confidence vote in parliament on November 20 to prove that he can command a majority. There will have to be some horse-trading with small parties and independents to ensure he succeeds. His grouping is so small that most of his team will have to be offered a government post. The outgoing government had 18 cabinet members, 15 ministers of state and five deputy ministers.

The Congress (I) party of Mr Gandhi will not be part of the government, meaning that it will be able to distance itself from Mr Chandra Shekhar whenever it seems politically expedient. It will now be in Mr Gandhi's gift to decide the timing of the next election, simply by withdrawing support from Mr Chandra Shekhar's administration. An election in February or March is distinctly possible.

President Venkataraman

went through a precise ritual to find a prime minister, first approaching Mr Gandhi as the leader of the biggest party. Then he went to the hardline Hindu organisation, the Bharatiya Janata Party, which has 86 MPs. After that it was the turn of the communists, who have 55 MPs, to be asked if

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Iraqis claim French sent Cheysson to free hostages

From PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

AN OFFICIAL newspaper in Baghdad, in a deliberate and damaging attack on the French government's credibility, reported yesterday that Paris sent a special envoy to negotiate last week's liberation of some 300 French people from Iraq. The state-run *al-Jumhuriya* claimed that Claude Cheysson, a former foreign minister under President Mitterrand, negotiated the hostages' release at a meeting with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister.

The timing of the report could not be more embarrassing for France, coinciding with the talks of James Baker, the American Secretary of State, with President Mitterrand in Paris about the Gulf and French strategy in the event of war breaking out. The Iraqis, in naming Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, as having authorised M Cheysson's mission, are clearly seeking to exacerbate the divisions that already exist between the two governments over future policy on the Gulf.

In a report from Baghdad, the Associated Press quoted Arab diplomatic sources as saying the two men had met in Tunis. The same sources indicated that the Palestine Liberation Organisation had paved the way for the talks, not long before the French nationals were set free. It is known that M Cheysson was in Tunis on French government business last

August, when he met PLO officials to explain France's position on the Gulf.

Only this week, reacting to persistent rumours that M Cheysson had been involved in securing a hostages deal, M Dumas denied that anyone had been given a mandate to negotiate with the Iraqi regime. French government spokesmen have also insisted that the liberation of the hostages was a purely "unilateral" decision by Baghdad that had involved France in neither negotiation nor concession.

For his part, M Cheysson — a veteran diplomat whose services were enlisted for a previous Gulf mission — has consistently refused to confirm or deny that he held discussions with Mr Aziz shortly before the hostages were put on a plane back to France. In an interview last Wednesday, M Cheysson, notable for his careful ambiguity, pointed out: "I meet whom I choose . . . besides, if I did meet Mr Aziz, I fail to see what harm there would have been."

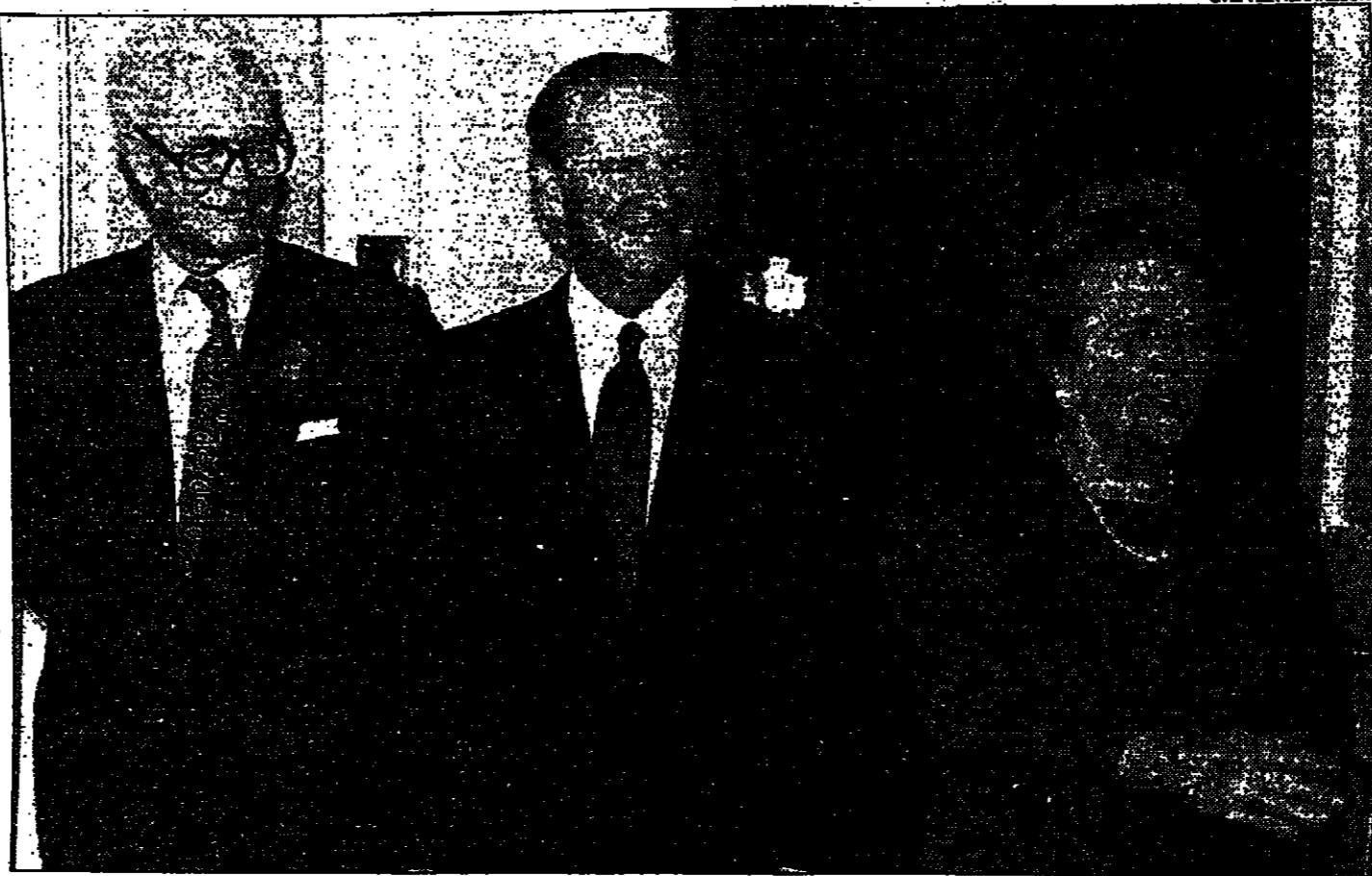
Meanwhile, with public support for the involvement of French troops in a Gulf war declining sharply in a new opinion poll, the government has made clear the limits of its support for present American strategy. In an apparent signal to the Bush administration, M Dumas has given a warning that France remains firmly opposed to any "unilateral action against Iraq" that has not been sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council.

That message, delivered before the National Assembly on Thursday, will be underlined in the talks between President Mitterrand and M Baker. Observers here believe that France is intent on imposing stringent conditions before agreeing to support American efforts to get a security council resolution that clears the way for an attack on Iraqi forces.

According to some reports, the French are opposed to any such resolution being put forward until later this month, in order to allow President Saddam Hussein one last opportunity to pull out of Kuwait.

To judge by yesterday's poll in *Le Figaro*, the public is fast losing its taste for French military involvement if the shooting starts. While a narrow majority still feels a Gulf war is inevitable, there was a seven-point increase, to 52 per cent, in the number of those now opposed to any participation by their own troops.

Support for French "solidarity" with the objectives of the US and Britain has declined by roughly the same percentage since an identical poll was taken two months ago.



Flying visit: Douglas Hurd, James Baker, the US Secretary of State, and Margaret Thatcher meeting at Downing Street yesterday for talks on the Gulf confrontation. Mr Baker, who flew in from Moscow, was not optimistic the Iraqis would quit Kuwait peacefully.

US troop build-up sends ultimatum to Baghdad

From MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN DHAHRAN

THE announcement by Washington that it is ordering between 150,000 and 200,000 more United States servicemen to the Gulf has effectively given Iraq an ultimatum. President Bush has clearly warned President Saddam Hussein that there will be an allied offensive to drive his troops from Kuwait in late January or February unless they are withdrawn.

Mr Bush's message was underscored yesterday when Richard Cheney, his defence secretary, indicated that the new deployment meant that plans for rotating troops in the Gulf had been abandoned.

The new deployment, which also involves aircraft, warships and hundreds more tanks, is needed to transform the present 230,000-strong US military presence from a defensive to an offensive force capable of taking on the 430,000 Iraqi troops now entrenched in or near Kuwait. Mr Cheney said the deployment would be completed some time after January 1, but the new troops would require a week or so for acclimatisation and preparation.

"November 17 was until recently the most popular bet for an attack, because it will be a moonless night. But people are now looking more towards early next year," a military source in Saudi Arabia said.

As in all public debates about war, an element of disinformation must be allowed for. There are even those in Egypt convinced that Mr Bush's Thanksgiving trip to the Saudi desert in two weeks' time is a clever blind to lull the Iraqis into complacency.

The immediate task now is to secure the United Nations resolution authorising the use of force for which Mr Baker has been preparing the ground during his current tour of Arab and European capitals. This must be done before the end of the month, when America hands over the UN Security Council presidency to Yemen, one of the few countries sympathetic to Iraq.

The new deployment will halve American strength in Germany and nearly double the size of US forces in the Gulf, giving Washington as many troops there as it maintained in Europe at the height of the Cold War. Total US strength will be roughly 400,000, not including 100,000 allied and Arab forces. At the peak, 543,000 servicemen were deployed in Vietnam.

The 1st and 3rd Armoured Divisions, a brigade-sized unit of the 2nd Armoured Division and the 2nd Armoured Cavalry Regiment, are being sent from Germany, along with the latest helicopters and roughly 400 state-of-the-art M1A1 tanks equipped for chemical warfare. The 1st Mechanised Infantry Division is being sent from America, and the number of US tanks in Saudi Arabia will increase from 800 to nearly 2,000.

The US Navy is sending three more aircraft-carrier battle groups. The marines are sending the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force and the 5,000-strong 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade from the United States.

Saddam interview for ITN

By MELINDA WITSTOCK
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein of Iraq has granted an exclusive interview to Independent Television News, the first by British television since the invasion of Kuwait.

Trevor MacDonald, the ITN newscaster, was last night in a presidential guest house in Baghdad awaiting the call to see the president. ITN hopes to broadcast the interview tomorrow, although it has not yet confirmed the date or time. "People have waited for long and short periods in the guest house," said Smart Purvis, the editor of *News At Ten*.

ITN has been promised by Iraq that there will be no restrictions on subjects or the precise questions Trevor MacDonald will be able to ask the president. Mr Purvis said he could not disclose how long the interview would be or whether it would go out unedited.

Hospitals in Greece on alert over Gulf

From CHRIS ELIOT
IN ATHENS

MILITARY hospitals in main Greek cities and on the island of Crete have been placed on alert to deal with possible casualties in the event of a war in the Gulf.

Sources say they include the biggest military hospital in Athens and other hospitals in Larisa in central Greece, Thessaloniki in the north and the University hospital at Iraklion on the island of Crete.

"We have received verbal instructions to prepare the hospital for any eventuality," said Lefteris Apostolakis, chairman of the Cretan hospital. At the same time the government instructed other medical centres and clinics on Crete to "set into motion secret deployment plans in offering their services in cases of emergency, such as surgery."

The alert was revealed a day after Constantine Mitsotakis, the prime minister, and leaders of the two socialist and communist main opposition parties declared that a war in the Gulf was becoming more likely.

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Brandt returns with 177 captives

From ASSOCIATED PRESS
IN BAGHDAD

A GERMAN Airbus carrying 177 Western hostages, mostly Germans but including 14 Britons, left for Frankfurt yesterday. President Saddam Hussein ordered the release of the hostages on Wednesday after talks with Willy Brandt, the former chancellor of West Germany.

Those leaving included about 120 Germans, 17 Italians and three Americans. Two Americans were held back and Iraqi officials told the US embassy that their papers were not in order. It was unclear if they would be allowed to leave later.

The list also included citizens of Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland, The Netherlands, Portugal, Canada, Australia and France. But Richard Ehrler, the German ambassador, said that the list could not be immediately confirmed. "We have so many people there is confusion all around, but the list shows that there are at least 177 people."

Mr Brandt said that he had discussed with President Saddam efforts to achieve a durable and solid settlement for the problems of the Middle East.

Many Western officials have criticised efforts by former leaders — including Edward Heath, the former British prime minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone, of Japan and Herr Brandt — to free hostages, claiming that they help divide the alliance against Iraq. But governments, including the French, have denied any deals were struck in exchange for the release of the hostages. The former leading politicians have maintained they were acting on purely humanitarian principles.

The three Americans who were released had been held at strategic sites in Iraq's so-called "human shield" effort to deter possible attack. They were taken to the Mansour Hotel, used by the government to process hostages. Witnesses inside the hotel identified the three as Don Swanson, his wife Brenda, and Miles Hoffman.

Mr Hoffman was working in Kuwait with a private company at the time of the invasion of Kuwait on August 2. On September 5, he was shot in the arm. The Iraqis say he was shot accidentally, but the firing reportedly occurred as the Iraqis were conducting a house search for foreigners.

There have been reports that gangrene had developed in the wound, and the US embassy placed him on its list of release requests twice before.

Diplomats said Mr Swanson was working as a construction engineer at Kuwait University at the time of the invasion.

On Thursday night, after a second meeting with President Saddam, Herr Brandt told Baghdad television that he would report the outcome of his meeting to European leaders.

He said that he was pleased to meet the president and he listened to his views. "I got the impression that the August 12 initiative has not received enough attention, especially in Europe," Herr Brandt said, referring to President Saddam's proposal linking a solution of the Gulf conflict to an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, which have been the focus of the Palestinian uprising.

Civilian 'task force' plan after Kaifu fiasco

From JOE JOSEPH IN TOKYO

THE forces ranged against President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The fiasco began when Toshiki Kaifu, the prime minister, kept calling Iraq "Iran" when first presenting the ill-fated bill to parliament. The embarrassment has continued to pile up since.

Last week, the government shelved plans to send a hundred doctors and nurses to the Middle East. On an advance team, reported that Japanese doctors were not a high priority for the Gulf forces.

For fear of further humiliating Mr Kaifu, the government did not put his bill to a vote yesterday in the lower house, despite its large majority there. But, desperate to show Washington that Tokyo is not trying to shirk its responsibilities, Mr Kaifu immediately started talking to opposition parties in the centre about forming a thousand-strong, civilians-only task force, modelled on one in Sweden, to meet Japan's obligations without controversy.

The bill will, however, take some time to prepare and may not be submitted to parliament until early February. When asked if legislation would be ready in time for Japan to help with men in the Gulf, Misao Sakamoto, chief cabinet secretary, told reporters: "Only God knows. We want to submit this as soon as possible, but this time we will make sure it is solid."

But the Socialists, who control the upper house, made it clear yesterday that they were not interested in joining other opposition parties in agreeing a new bill with the government. They are arguing to make drafting a compromise plan a "prioritized affair," further undermining Mr Kaifu's damaged reputation for being a man who gets things done in parliament.

King Fahd is nud

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Bridging the Jewish divide

Clifford Longley

Jonathan Sacks has long been admired by the few who know him as a source of fresh and different thinking in Anglo-Jewry, an unexpected push in the opposite direction to the way things are generally moving. Far from this putting them off, the United Hebrew Congregations, to which the majority of practising Jews in Britain belong, have elected him to be their next Chief Rabbi in succession to Lord Jakobovits when he retires next year. Before that election, the BBC already had him in mind for the 1990 Reith Lectures, and he begins them next Wednesday on Radio 4.

The lectures will come as a surprise to those who have not yet encountered this educated and sophisticated mind. For generational reasons, prominent rabbis in Britain tend to seem slightly foreign in accent and style, with personal perspectives to match. If over 60, they bear the stigma of the Holocaust, in mind or body, or both. Their presence in Britain has been a unique grace to the entire culture, not just to their own, but they are growing old. The leadership of Britain's 300,000 Jews has now to return to the homespun of former years, and Dr Sacks, 42 and London-born, is there to prove it. He is very Jewish, but could not be more British.

He is in the tradition of Jewish intellectuals of the middle ground, which does not mean unexciting. But if the centre of gravity of British Jewry has not shifted in the last few decades, its extremes have been moving asunder and are now almost as far apart as it is possible to imagine. The rise of ultra-orthodoxy and the retreat into strict observance and separation has coincided with the extreme of "assimilation" represented by a virtual mass defection from Jewish ranks. These responses to the modern, secular world are so contradictory as to suggest a split in the Jewish personality.

Dr Sacks, on the other hand, stands for the possibility of reconciliation, for again making whole the two halves. He has assimilated to the degree that he has absorbed most of what the modern world has to offer (not excluding a double first from Cambridge), yet he also sets the protection of Jewish custom and tradition and the advancement of its culture as the higher priority. He is, above all, a philosopher, which not only gives him a love of precision in meaning but also a rare depth to his understanding of religion. And it is the philosophical credentials of Judaism that are most in need of attention, the rediscovery of an intellectually honest ground for belief in God.

The perceived lack of it has driven many a young Jew to abandon the faith and practice of his parents, and even inside the synagogues there are some Jews who dare not examine their own doubts. Jewishness has been reduced, more often than some care

to admit, to not much more than observance for the sake of the children and parents, uneasiness about the reappearance of anti-Semitism, and support for Israel.

Religion as such has become problematical. The continuing legacy of the Holocaust is a cruel crisis of faith in Judaism. After that epoch of total disaster it is no longer easy for the Jews to be sure that God means them well, that their prayers are heard. The "meaning of the Holocaust", in Jewish salvation history, will be pursued to the end of time, but that does not make it less painful now. And as time passes and the rest of the world forgets, it will become a more lonely quest for sense and peace of mind. But nothing can bring back confidence in God more quickly than the knowledge that some of the best minds of the age have confirmed that the quest is rational and philosophically respectable — especially if one of those best minds is the Chief Rabbi's. Christianity in Britain has also suffered severely from its neglect of philosophy, for it too has allowed the "God-question" to be settled in the negative by default.

The other swing, towards ultra-conservatism in the British orthodox community (for some reason "conservative" in American Jewry means the opposite), seems to be a mirror of the hope of assimilation that grows from Jewish doubt about belief. This reaction is more a ritualist than a truly fundamentalist movement, as it emphasises strict observance of dietary, sabbath and marriage law and encourages withdrawal from contact with the secular world. Some Jewish commentators see it as an attempt to shift the weight of Jewish identity onto the practice of religion rather than its content. Perhaps that too is a hidden clue to a lack of confidence in the content, again because of unresolved problems in Jewish theology arising from the Holocaust.

Confidence in a faith is a subtle quality, and lack of it shows in many ways, some contradictory. Dr Sacks has that confidence, and the quiet charisma to communicate it. The subject of his Keith Lectures — religion and ethics in a secular society — is good ground for him to build on: the Jewish contribution to ethics is distinctly rational and has a long, illustrious tradition. Moral philosophy is a Jewish preoccupation.

In secular society the ethical certainties of Christianity are no longer beyond question. So a way of reasoning about ethics that does not take Christianity for granted should be welcomed and appreciated. And the Jewish community both needs and deserves such appreciation. Ultra-assimilation and ultra-orthodoxy are both reactions to a deep-seated sense of rejection felt by Jews, while moderation, the middle way between extremes, requires confidence in oneself and acceptance by others.

...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

Democracy among Tory MPs, as Julian Critchley has explained, is the system under which the common will is least likely to emerge. Events of the past week prove it.

Half the Tory backbenchers you talk to subject you to a private baraguge about how much nicer it would be if Mrs Thatcher could be surgically removed and somebody cuddly put in her place quickly, before the next election.

"But would you vote that way?" one asks.

"On the second ballot, yes," they reply.

"What about the first ballot?"

"Ah. We could summarise the problem as the *firstballot* dilemma. How to get from here to the second ballot without passing through a first ballot on the way. The crocodile has been goaded into the shallow water, but who is to stick in the knife? The first lunge might not kill: she might make it back into the deep water; her teeth are sharp and her memory is long. Let's subconsciously be bitten. So they all stand gingerly by the edge of the pool, muttering about "loyalty" as the sharp-toothed one thrashes around on the mud bank.

It was not always thus. As Mr Critchley — again — explains, before the advent of democracy in the Tory party, the leader was not voted for, but born. Grey men in grey suits were the midwives at this birth. Word got around that the lads were restless; the lads were privately consulted in the Commons Smoking Room; the object of their predominant affection was told of his new job; and the existing leader was asked which title took his fancy for the Lords.

Now it has all changed. Now you have to put your head above the parapet before the gunfire has stopped, and that's a very unfair thing to ask a Tory MP to do.

But here I part company with Mr Critchley. He, I think, would like to go back to the old system, but nostalgia is pointless. There is no way we can revert. Whatever its democratic credentials may in practice be, the old way could never be

explained to schoolchildren at GCSE.

Nor is it reasonable to accept the existing system but ask the MPs to be braver. If they were brave they would not be MPs.

An MP has been selected, elected and promoted for his circumspection. All his political life has been punished for any tendency to say things that elements of his audience may not wish to hear. To offer — at so senior a stage in our greyed and considered privy council's career — so tempting a reward for the very behaviour for which the voters, constituency associations and government whips have been punishing him since he entered Parliament, with a series of horrid little electric shocks, is actually quite cruel and under laboratory conditions has been shown to induce personality disorders in mice.

By contrast, my own proposals go with the Pavlovian grain. I shall start with the more modest. At present it is up to the prospective candidate to decide whether or not to stand. He lets his name go forward.

Why? That attracts unnecessary odium. Why not enter the name of anyone who has been proposed and seconded, regardless of whether he says he wants to run. We know he wants to run.

My second proposal goes further. Voting among MPs for the leadership is by secret ballot, and that is as it should be. You vote as you please, see who wins, then let it be discreetly known that this was your choice too.

The cloak of anonymity protects the voter. Why, then, deny the candidate that cloak? Why can't Tories stand anonymously for the leadership?

I can guess what you are thinking, but you are wrong. In the first ballot, MPs do not need to know whom they are voting for; they only need to know whom they are *not* voting for.

The ballot paper would say "1: Mrs Thatcher; 2: Not Mrs Thatcher; 3: Another Not Mrs Thatcher... etc". If No 1 did not gain an overall majority there would be a second ballot and numbers 2, 3 etc (who would have been voted for randomly) would be invited to say who they were. If we hadn't guessed already.

Greater love hath no man

The charity Refugee Year has received what it terms a "positive response" from Baghdad to a suggestion that nuns and priests of all denominations should replace hostages in Iraq.

Refugee Year — patron, Mother Teresa of Calcutta — has asked members of the clergy to volunteer as replacements for the civilians in the potential war zone. "We are particularly asking missionary priests and nuns with specialist medical skills to come forward," says Danny Lillis, deputy secretary general of the charity.

"Missionaries are trained to go into areas of difficulty. We feel

their psyches are better adapted to deal with the strains."

During a visit to Baghdad, Lillis met close aides of Saddam Hussein, including Taza Yassin Ramadhan, deputy prime minister, and Sa'di Mehdi Saleh, speaker of the National Assembly.

"I was told they would give the idea serious consideration," he says. Father Kevin Doherty, secretary-general of Refugee Year, who accompanied Lillis, stayed in Baghdad for further negotiations.

Lillis returns to Baghdad on Monday, and he and Father Doherty hope to meet Saddam during the week.

Meanwhile, British clerics are already showing their spiritual mettle as word spreads on the ecclesiastical grapevine. "We have received a number of individual approaches," says Lillis, "though we are unlikely to get 3,500 missionaries, which is roughly the number of people held in Iraq. Priority will be given to volunteers with special skills."

The versatility of the Scottish mind in concocting euphemisms for excessive drinking is confirmed with the publication of a Scots Thesaurus. The scholarly tome, from Aberdeen University Press, carries 50 alternatives for the word "drunk", including *beamf'ill*, *camperote*, *chippit*, *smekkit*, *souple*, *steamin* and *tosie*.

Cover blown

The outwardly genteel world of book tokens has been rocked by a racket in book-tokens. Sales assistants have been warned to look out for customers bearing sheaves of stolen, old-style tokens — square, rather than the updated oblongs — which they use to buy large quantities of books before returning to seek cash refunds. So far two arrests have been made.

Bill Barnes, managing director of Book Tokens, says: "In June we put the surplus stock in sealed bags and sent it to be destroyed. Some obviously was not."

So far £14,000 worth of bogus tokens have been accepted, in shops from Colchester to Gloucester and including London. Fortunately, spotting the criminals is not too difficult. "They stand out from the crowd," says Barnes.

Unlike seasoned browsers, they look like extras from the TV series *Minder*. "You could say they are from the scruffy end of the market. They are not likely to read *The Times*."

Home and away

For the second week running Sheffield Wednesday will today be without the solid support of its best-known cheer leader, Roy Hattersley, bowed down by pressure of work. He has

Diana Gordon urges the Home Secretary not to follow America's hardline policies

Drugs: put rescue before repression

William J. Bennett, who resigned this week as director of the American Office of National Drug Control Policy, favoured capital punishment for drug dealers. So do a majority of the members of both houses of Congress. In September, the police chief of Los Angeles, testifying before a Senate committee, suggested that those "who blast some pot on a casual basis" should be "taken out and shot".

We in the United States have embraced a grandiose and one-dimensional approach to illicit drug use. We cast the drug problem solely in moral terms, reject all policy distinctions between types of drugs and users and press other nations to follow our lead. Britain can and should avoid our mistakes and develop a policy that has more hope of minimising the harm to users and society caused by compulsive drug use.

Execution is not, of course the only weapon in the American war on drugs. Congress has given President Bush more than \$10 billion (£5 billion) for 1991 to provide more crime-fighters in the Drug Enforcement Administration and the FBI, larger drug

squads in big-city police departments, and a pristine for treatment and prevention programmes. At the local level we are beefing up police patrols while cutting other services (New York City) and hitting taxpayers with regressive surtaxes to pay for drug enforcement programmes (Kansas City).

Rhetorical weapons are popular, too. Bennett once said: "Should we have drug education programmes or should we have tough policy? If we have the choice of only one, I will take law enforcement policy every time because I know children."

So drug-control efforts in America are both narrow and absolutist, unabashedly repressive. Although unlikely to make even modest progress towards reducing the social and economic costs of drug abuse, they nevertheless foster corruption, erode civil liberties, marginalise the young, the poor and the black, and waste taxpayers' dollars. Imprisoning hundreds of thousands of drug abusers has failed to stem the supply of illegal drugs. But this approach is now so entrenched that it is hard to see how we can correct it.

Britain, too, is relying increasingly on the crime-control approach to drugs, retreating from the medical approach to heroin addiction that was dominant before the 1980s. British policy is sometimes influenced by American wrong-headedness. The inclusion of life sentences in the Controlled Drugs Penalties Act of 1985 mimics American sentencing patterns. On returning from a visit to America earlier this year, David Waddington, the Home Secretary, praised the lengths to which Americans have gone to confiscate the assets of drug dealers, and urged equal zeal in Britain.

But an American-style war on drugs would make the situation worse, depleting resources that could otherwise go toward treatment and prevention of towards altering the conditions of life that make drug-taking and drug-selling a way of life in many poor areas. Indeed it would probably make those neighbourhoods more dangerous, as dealers protected themselves against increasingly violent efforts to stamp them out. And such a war might actually stimulate drug production, for success in drug seizures add to demand and keep profits high.

Professional practice in Britain has not completely capitulated to the American way. On a recent trip to London and Merseyside I found humane and sensible public health strategies with realistic goals for reduction of the harm caused by compulsive drug-taking. Needle-exchange programmes have contributed to keeping the AIDS infection rate low in Merseyside compared with other regions.

Such an approach leads logically to decriminalisation, at least of marijuana, punishment for use or sale of which is surely a waste of police time and money and a counterproductive labelling of the young.

Those I talked to, however, generally do not accept the free-market strategy that would legalise all drugs and ignore the social contexts in which compulsive drug use is most common. They see the need to link legalisation to larger efforts to address poverty and instability, alienation and boredom.

The blunt message from America is that those beggared by a miasma of drugs and deprivation, whether users or dealers, should be repressed rather than rescued. There is still time for Britain to reject this brutal message. The Home Secretary should stay at home and heed his own innovators and researchers.

The author is a political science professor at the City College, City University of New York.

What can the Tories do after so humiliating a collapse?

John Curtice believes the Bradford by-election result shows government fortunes still on a downward track

The results of the Bradford North and Boote by-elections will do nothing to ease the Tory leadership crisis. They confirm that what little ground the party recovered during the summer has largely been lost. But the results also contain warnings for both opposition parties.

The 22.8 point drop in the Conservative vote in Bradford North enters the record books. Although not quite the largest fall in the Conservative vote in a modern by-election — Sutton and Cheam, Richmond and Greenwich are all bigger (see table) — it is the largest post-war fall in the Conservative vote in a seat successfully defended by Labour. Tory by-election disasters can usually be put down to a strong third-party challenge. Tory voters flock to the Liberal Democrats either because they are the most effective way of registering mid-term protest, or because they offer the chance of getting rid of Labour locally. But in Bradford the Tory vote collapsed despite there never being any prospect of a Liberal Democratic victory.

Boote was not quite so bad. The Conservatives' share of the vote held steady compared with the previous by-election in the seat in May. More important psychologically, the party retained second place, ahead of the Liberal Democrats. But the result still represented a fall of 11 points below the general election figure. This in a seat where the Tory vote had already fallen substantially in 1983 and 1987 — and even though the Conservative loss last month in the very similar nearby seat of Knowsley South was only six points.

These results suggest two conclusions. Conservative support has fallen back again in the last month. And electorally the party is now back to where it was during last spring's poll-tax fracas. Further evidence comes from the latest BBC poll of polls, which gives the Conservatives 32 per cent — four points down on the end of September and only two points better than last April.

The Liberal Democrats' achievement in coming second in Bradford will enable them to maintain the momentum created by their Eastbourne success. Further, with the Greens now scoring only 1 or 2 per cent in by-elections, the Liberal Democrats' mastery of the centre vote in England is undisputed. But there is still a question mark over the depth of their revival.

In both Eastbourne and Bradford, local factors were working in their favour. The Liberal Democrats have vied for control of Eastbourne council for 20 years, and although in Bradford they only have two councillors, their by-election candidate, David

Ward, was one of them. Additionally, his ward is part of the Bradford North constituency, and in securing local election twice he has managed to win a ward that other Liberal Democrat and Alliance candidates have failed to win. He entered the by-election with a local personal vote already established.

In Boote there was no local strength to build on — and there was no sign of any revival. The Liberal Democrat vote even



Threshold of disaster: Tory Joy Atkin campaigning in Bradford

slipped back slightly on last May and the party did no better than in Knowsley South in September. Also, the party now faces the task of maintaining its momentum in the two vacant Paisley seats (both being contested on November 29), where the Scottish Nationalists have a far stronger local presence than the Liberal Democrats.

For Labour the results at both Boote and Bradford North are undoubtedly encouraging — but they also suggest a measure of

caution. The party did well to add three points to its previous by-election vote in Boote. Labour has now increased its share of the vote in five of the six by-elections held this year, which adds up to its most consistent success since 1971. But the nine-point increase in Bradford is well below its 17-point advance in the latest national opinion polls: Labour's share of the vote was just one point higher than at the 1979 general election.

This suggests that the Liberal Democrats have taken votes from Labour as well as the Conservatives. A significant section of Labour's support is still "soft" and could potentially be won away if the Liberal Democrats continue to flourish.

These by-election results clearly confirm the depth of Conservative troubles. The party's position is worsening rather than improving, whereas at the same stage in the last parliament, in the autumn of 1986, it was on the road to recovery. And in 1982, the afterglow of the Falklands war was still visible. With the Treasury's forecast on Thursday that economic growth will resume only in the second half of next year, the odds on a spring election are clearly lengthening.

There are of course two important jokers left in the pack. One is the Gulf, the other is the possibility of a leadership change. As Tory MPs contemplate the message from Bradford and Boote this weekend, a few more may be persuaded of the need to play the latter card.

The author is senior lecturer in politics at Strathclyde University.

Taking up two-and-a-half acres, the sculpture has been an exhibit at the National Garden Festival in Gateshead. Palumbo acquired it by making a sealed bid to organisers seeking new homes for this and more than 60 other giant sculptures that decorated the 200-acre site until the festival ended last month.

The artist, Ray Smith, says his work is an ambiguous piece able to be interpreted as illustrating "historical or political events, joy or celebration, defiance or terror".

The museum staff, however, retain their sense of proportion. The clamp is accurately labelled "an instrument of torture".

Why does America say about the clamp of ages?

There's nothing like a threat to one's pocket — or the prospect of filling it — to encourage the burying of hatchets. It is a long time since Bob Hawke, the Australian prime minister, had a kind word to say for Mrs Thatcher. But his reaction to her stand on EC farm subsidies could hardly be bettered by the most fervent Euro-basher on the far right of the Tory party.

In a radio interview this week



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

JUSTICE FOR CRIMINALS

Whisper it not in Pinner, but the government's criminal justice bill, published yesterday, is designed to stop judges putting burglars in prison in future, statutory guidelines will lay down that imprisonment should be imposed only when the offence is "so serious" or the danger of "serious harm" to the public so great, that only prison will do. Moreover, judges are to take far less account of the offender's past record. Locking up the habitual burglar will become far harder. And fines are to be related for the first time to the offender's income, so that the jails will be less crowded with those who will not pay because they cannot.

Since this is a Tory government David Waddington, the home secretary, had of course to pretend otherwise. He described the new policy as "a more coherent legislative framework for sentencing". The tough side of the bill's twin-track approach to sentencing was much to the fore. As promised, the powers of the courts to impose long sentences on violent and sexual offenders are reinforced. Remission is abolished; parole limited. Punishment in the community is to be strengthened with the new penalty of curfew, enforced by electronic tagging operated by private security guards. Magistrates will be able to impose fines of up to £5,000 and to penalise the parents of offending juveniles. If and when Mr Waddington rises next year again to appraise the law-and-order mob at the Conservative party conference, he will have plenty of ammunition.

Yet this is a bill that offers more, on balance, to liberal reformers than to their opponents. No doubt, money played its part in this. To keep a criminal in jail costs £300 a week. This is, in effect, a state subsidy to the burglar to perfect his craft with expert tuition from his fellows.

The government is faced with a policy dilemma. Ridding the prisons of their Dickensian squalor has become imperative. Over the past 15 years, they have become the most riot-prone in the West. Successive surges of violence, which swept through 18 jails on a single night in 1986, have focused attention on

living conditions. This week's report by Judge Tunnicliffe on Armley jail in Leeds was the most severe indictment by a prison inspector in modern times.

Imperative too is the need to economise at the Home Office. No responsible government could continue lavish spending on the police, and on jails, without a scrap of evidence that crime is thereby being prevented. The alternatives to the measures in the bill are more violence in prison, more suicides, more human degradation and more expenditure, with no discernible advantage to the wider community.

Parliament, however, has scope to improve on what the home secretary has begun. One set of proposals ought to be rejected. Parents of juveniles may be fined if their youngster's offences can be blamed on them. This is the kind of proposal that makes perfect sense to middle-class ministers who generally leave the taming of adolescence to their children's boarding schools. For, say, the single mother in Brixton, struggling against odds to keep a young person on track, they represent only a threat. Many such parents will be tempted to wash their hands of their responsibilities. Parental influence — the last, best hope of deflecting the youngster from a life of crime — will be removed. The magistrates do not want these powers. Parliament should not force them to have them.

Another provision ought to be added. The guidelines, though an improvement, still give the judges considerable discretion. Much depends on how the appeal court interprets them. All this is hazardous. The transmission mechanism between parliament, home office and the judiciary is creaky and ineffective. Judges are notoriously their own creatures, disengaged through long exercise of power to head outside influence. Penal reformers, now backed by the Labour party, have long advocated the creation of a sentencing council. Representing all interested parties, its job would be to formulate detailed guidance on sentencing for the courts. Justice demands no less.

HERE'S TO YOU

Mary Robinson's triumph in the Irish presidential elections marks a watershed in Ireland's political culture. The presidency has little power, but that does not diminish the significance of her win. Hers is a victory of probity against the pork barrel, of individual merit against the cosy intimacy of a political élite which is divided into two major parties founded in a civil war 70 years ago. She has given hope that Ireland is ready for change.

Much of Mrs Robinson's importance lies in the simple fact that she beat an old Fianna Fail warhorse, Brian Lenihan, the favourite until late in the campaign. Dublin's political club, which just about admits women providing they do not aspire to run anything, had not intended Mr Lenihan to come under any serious threat. She was helped by the fact that shortly before the elections, Mr Lenihan was caught telling quite unnecessary lies and his old friend, the prime minister, Charles Haughey, was compelled to drop him from the cabinet to keep his fragile coalition on the road. Even so, Mr Haughey campaigned for him energetically. In choosing Mrs Robinson the voters have made a clear protest against the indulgent attitude to political misdemeanours which has prevailed in the past.

The republic's two leading figures now illustrate the contrast between past and future. Mr Haughey is a veteran exponent of a traditional nationalism, long on rhetorical appeals to "Irish values" and short on specific ways to achieve the unification of north and south. Mrs Robinson, by contrast, breaks almost every rule in Ireland's book. She is a working mother, an ex-member of the tiny Labour party, in favour of contraception and publicly available information on abortion and openly sympathetic to Ulster unionism.

Little wonder that Mr Haughey muttered "dangerous nonsense" on hearing that she favoured an activist presidency. Given the

constitutional constraints on the president, Mrs Robinson's activism will have to be largely intellectual. She has already thrown out dozens of fresh ideas and should continue to do so. Her election suggests that she may be sowing radical thoughts in more fertile ground than has been imagined. Ireland's politics, society and culture have been shot through with the influences of a conservative countryside. A more secular and more pluralist generation in the east of the country has been denied a strong political voice. Now those reforming influences — whose efforts are currently concentrated on liberalising laws on contraception, abortion, homosexuality and divorce — have a spokeswoman at the top. Greater separation of law and church, essential to a modern society, could eventually be on the cards.

At the least, standards in public life should improve. Mrs Robinson is a lawyer of international repute who is unlikely to stay silent if rules are bent. She also enjoys the huge advantage of being associated with neither of the major parties.

Mrs Robinson left the only party with which she had been connected in circumstances which hint at the most profound impact which she might yet make. She resigned from the Labour party over the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement because she considered it unfair to the north's one million unionists. This suggests a politician who is serious about understanding unionist fears and who would make the reconciliation of the nationalist and unionist traditions, of which so many Irish politicians talk endlessly, a practical priority. Her position dictates that she must work with people, not with parties and programmes, to change attitudes. In a country where party politicians, in north and south, have been less than triumphantly successful at ridding Ireland of mistrust and hatred, that is all to the good.

RABBIT DROPPINGS

Last year, Americans were flourishing Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* as evidence of their country's imminent decline. Now, it seems, a work of fiction has taken over as the favourite symbol of doom. The last of John Updike's tetralogy of novels about Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, *Rabbit at Rest*, has been excoriated by critics as too savage a metaphor for America's moral slippage. An editorial in the *New York Times* came to Rabbit's rescue, claiming that these criticisms were "excessive" and said "more about discontent with the American self than they say about the novels".

Current American literary fashion favours the minimalist novel, a day in the life of an East Coast academic or a Greenwich Village artist. But once every few years, a broad-brush novel appears from a famous author — Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, the *Rabbit* books — and tends to be taken literally, as if it were a mirror to the woes of society. Mr Updike's mirror reflects a decade, the Eighties, which he deplores. "Everything falling apart, airplanes, bridges, eight years under Reagan of nothing, trusting the store, making money out of nothing, trusting in God."

Why does America care so much for books as the mirror, straight or distorting, in which its society can be seen? Why does Britain care so little? Americans are more reverential towards their prizewinning authors. When Martin Amis writes about the inevitability of nuclear annihilation few British readers take him seriously. They are perhaps more attuned to irony, to satire. British readers of *Bonfire of the Vanities*, recognising Mr Wolfe's caricature, are surprised when much of his fiction comes true on New York's streets.

Britons, too, tend to rely more on other art forms for their social comment. British cinema is more political than America's. Hollywood finds that fantasy and escapism sell more

tickets. The British also describe their society better on the stage than in novels: John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, first seen in 1956, is perhaps the best parallel to *Bonfire* or the *Rabbit* books. Written as an antidote to the genteel, or gentlemanly, style of Terence Rattigan, *Look Back in Anger* opened up the British stage to the raw feelings and frustrations of a new generation. Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money*, tried to send up the Eighties, but the joke backfired. The play proved most successful with the City louts it scorned.

The panoramic social novel used to be more popular in Britain. George Eliot was a household name. Dickens excelled at social comment, and became a hero himself as writer and family man (which is perhaps why he kept his mistress so secret). Yet Dickens' novels were adored at the time not for their dig at Victorian society, but for their rumbustious characters. The Britons love Pickwick just as they love Falstaff, or for that matter Pooch Bear or Billy Bunter, fat clowns all. Asked what 20th-century books sum up their country, Britons are more likely to opt for middle-class childhood nostalgia — *Wind in the Willows*, perhaps, or *Swallows and Amazons* — than Margaret Drabble or Graham Greene.

The British are simply less interested in their national identity than Americans. They are reluctant to define Britishness, and less concerned to map the contours that are shaped on their identity by world events. Americans are almost all immigrants, and want to distinguish what it is that makes them American from the part of them that is German, Irish, Vietnamese or Mexican. Moreover, America is still relatively new, while this country has been around for so long that the British simply feel rather than think British. Perhaps that is why they retreat to whimsy rather than soul-searching for their bedtime reading.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Seeing Germans as 'one of us'

From Sir Reginald Hibbert

Sir, When you describe Chancellor Kohl's recent negotiating manner as even bordering on the insufferable (your leader today), I wonder what standard of comparison you are applying. Insufferable compared with what? With various French moves over the years? With some of Mrs Thatcher's pronouncements and manoeuvres, as seen by Britain's partners? With some of the unilateral actions taken from time to time by US governments?

Has Chancellor Kohl been doing anything more than indulging in the normal behaviour of national leaders trying to pursue national political imperatives within the constraints of an increasingly interdependent world? Is it the relatively reticent behaviour of the FRG while Germany was divided which has been subnormal by international standards?

In what was presumably meant to be one of several examples of Her Kohl's insufferability, you said that he saw Mrs Thatcher off in the spring of 1989 over the modernisation of Lance missiles, which you described as Mrs Thatcher's test of loyalty.

The test might have been reasonable under the old rules of the east-west confrontation; but even those who thought it so in early 1989 ought to be able to appreciate with hindsight that achieving the reunification of Germany and the consequent collapse of the Soviet system in eastern Europe, while keeping Germany in Nato, was bound to eclipse the Lance missile issue. A German could be excused for thinking that it was the loyalty test which was insufferable.

These matters would be much more easily handled if we could all agree at last to regard the Germans as "one of us".

Yours faithfully,
REGINALD HIBBERT,
174 Queen Alexandra Mansions,
Bridgwater Street, WC1.
November 6.

From Mr Charles L. Parker

Sir, Over the past ten years only two countries out of the EC 12 are "net contributors" to the Common Market and they are Germany and Britain. Our net contributions for the last three years have been £1,721 million (1987); £1,362 million (1988); £1,966 million (1989). The contributions since 1979 have been a staggering £11,388 million.

So much for the tough talking of Mrs Thatcher.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES L. PARKER,
2 Windsor Court,
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire.
November 1.

From Mr P. H. Rollason

Sir, The disadvantage of a single European currency, according to Nicholas Ridley ("Two-speed with Britain in the lead", November 3) is that those who cannot compete with Germany's productivity will have to cut their wages. He also infers that, should we retain our own currency, we would be able to adjust the exchange rate to keep our industries competitive, presumably by devaluing the pound. In both instances there is a cut in value of the wages received. So what is the difference?

The outstanding advantage of a single currency would be that savings accumulated during a lifetime of work and the pension earned would retain their value, giving an opportunity for the elderly to maintain their standard of living to the end of their lives. This is an opportunity which has not existed whilst successive governments have demonstrated their inability to control inflation and maintain the value of the pound despite having total control of the Bank of England and the exchange rate adjustment.

I would feel more comfortable with an escu in my pocket assuming, as does Mr Ridley, that its value was controlled by the Bundesbank whose care for the value of the Deutschmark far exceeds that of our own various governments' efforts with the pound.

Yours faithfully,
P. H. ROLLASON,
Old Forge Cottage, The Common,
Worsters, Surrey.
November 4.

Hunting on Trust land

From the Executive Director of the League Against Cruel Sports

Sir, Sir Richard Acland (November 6) has adduced an extraordinary fit of pique in his reaction to the members of the National Trust voting to ban the hunting of deer on Trust land. He claims that in one year, stag hunts tracked down and "put out of pain", 57 injured deer — many of which had "gangrenous" wounds filled with maggots, their bellies gnawed by rats and their eyes pecked out by jackdaws.

I would remind Sir Richard that it is we "ants" who are supposed to use the emotive language — not the hardened "realists" of the hunting set.

For years stag hunters have been telling us that it is the existence of hunting which prevents poachers and farmers taking pot-shots at the deer. It seems from his 57 injured deer that the hunters' claims have been false. We have also repeatedly been told that the hunters are the conservationists. Now we are being told

Christian dilemma on 'just war'

From the Secretary General of the General Synod of the Church of England

Sir, The House of Bishops of the Church of England did not at its recent meeting find itself "so far from agreement that no statement [on the Gulf crisis] was possible" (Clifford Longley's article, November 3). The great majority of the House felt simply that no statement was desirable.

They took the view that in such a highly complex situation a statement by them at that time would have added little to what had already been said by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the House of Lords on September 6 and by other church leaders on the issue. But they did endorse a call by the archbishops of Canterbury and York for prayer for peace in the Gulf, a call which many would surely welcome but which seems to have gone largely unnoticed by the bishops' critics.

I hope that your readers and commentators will show some understanding of the bishops' dilemma. On this occasion, they have been criticised by some for their failure to pronounce. On others, they have only to open their collective mouth to attract equal criticism. On both occasions the impartial observer might be forgiven for thinking that the criticisms say more about the preoccupations of those who utter them than they do about the shortcomings of the bishops.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP MAWER,
Secretary General,
The General Synod of the Church of England,
Church House,
Great Smith Street, SW1.
November 6.

From the President of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Sir, Instead of "going on the Aquinas book", as Clifford Longley suggests, could we not go back even further, and go by the New Testament book? We should ask ourselves how the "just war" idea arose in the first place.

For its first 300 years' existence the church had to endure the most

frightful persecution, with frequent systematic attempts by the Roman state to exterminate it completely. When, at the end of

three long and terrible centuries, the Roman emperor himself, Constantine, became converted to Christianity, the battered church found itself presented with what seemed like a golden opportunity to use the power of the state to extend Christ's kingdom throughout the world.

This was, in fact, the same temptation which came to Christ himself in the wilderness, when the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world. Jesus resisted the temptation totally. The church, when it turned came to be similarly tempted, however, was totally unable to resist. Since then, it has never again been able to take the way of the Cross seriously.

Soon after this temptation, when the church became fully aware of the total contradiction between the exercise of worldly power through the state and commitment to the spiritual power of Christ's love, it found itself in a terrible dilemma. In an attempt to escape from this dilemma, first Augustine sought to adapt the pagan idea of "iustum bellum" to a Christian application, and the theory of a just war was born. Centuries later, when the church had long come to terms with worldly necessities imposed as a result of collaboration with the state, Aquinas set out to elaborate the theory in exact detail.

Despite this attempt to wriggle out of the dilemma caused by trying to reconcile worldly power with the power of love, the church has always been uneasily aware of the contradiction between war and the way of Christ, as witness, for example, the frequently repeated resolution of successive Lambeth conferences since 1930: "War, as a method of settling international disputes, is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Even more to the point was the 1978 Lambeth resolution that "the use of violence is ultimately contradictory to the Gospel".

Yours faithfully,
GORDON WILSON, President,
Anglican Pacifist Fellowship,
4 Byron Close,
Hampton, Middlesex.
November 4.

Patience in the Gulf

From Professor Sir Harry Hinsley, FBA

Sir,

Despite repeating his sensible

warning that to go to war with Iraq without UN blessing would be deeply divisive, Sir Michael Howard now advises (article, November 5) that "on balance Bush must go to war".

He makes two assertions in support of his case: the policy of economic sanctions has not been thought through, and within a year the blockade will be leaking like a sieve. The fact is that the policy has not been tested when applied, as now, universally; and there is no compelling reason for concluding now that it will not succeed. Nothing will be lost if we give it more time.

The huge cost of moving forces to the Gulf has already been incurred. It will be hardly more expensive to keep them there than to have them training at home or in Europe; and considerably more realistic.

There is no shortage of oil and no threat of a shortage. On the other hand, the strain on Iraq will be enormous, and it cannot be more than marginally reduced by attempts to break the blockade.

Such attempts will be made, and

efforts will continue to negotiate a compromise retreat from the UN's resolutions. It can do no harm to start listing and numbering them as they are detected.

But since the credibility of the Security Council is the most serious potential casualty of the crisis for everybody in the long run, the attempts may well die out if it is made plain that some states are determined to uphold it without resorting to force unless they are attacked.

Yours sincerely,
F. H. HINSLY,
St John's College, Cambridge.
November 5.

From Miss Barbara G. Oakley

Sir, With the news that Mr Bush's patience is wearing thin (report, November 1) one can but hope his advisers know and have pointed out to him the old bedouin proverb quoted by Bruce Chatwin in his book, *The Songlines*: I against my brother, I and my brother against our cousin, I, my brother and our cousin against the neighbours, All of us against the foreigner. Yours faithfully,

BARBARA G. OAKLEY,
The Little Priory, Kimpton,
Hertfordshire.
November 1.

From Mr Edward Hay

Sir, Of course, Sir John Stokes is correct. Since 1980, I have spent a month each year in the Middle East and frequently discussed the political situation with British expatriates. All, whether in Jordan or Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, have been aware of the risks they run by living and working in the Middle East but ready to accept them because of the pay.

It is no

Home from home: David Hicks

The outside story of an inside man

David Hicks, the interior designer, indulges his love of the exterior at weekends, and occasionally on weekdays, at his estate in Oxfordshire. There he can shoot, ride, garden and concern himself with matters of preservation, as well as working in his design studio in a 19th century folly in the grounds.

A passionate gardener, he designs exteriors as an integral extension of his interiors. "Look at that, it's almost a room," he says, gesturing through the window of his classical drawing room at the classical lines of his architecturally clipped hedge of hornbeam "stil" trees. They surround lawn which is mown up the middle but left to grow wild at the sides to create the rich combination of textures for which his interior designs are noted.

"I love straight lines and tremendous discipline with a bit of romantic overgrowth and disorder," he says, talking of his gardens in terms more suited to fabrics and architecture — his "tapestry tunnel" of roses, honeysuckle and clematis, his "crenelated" herbaceous borders and the "pyramids" of shocking pink roses and geraniums he intends to construct in the "red garden" over the coming months.

The long garden, the pot garden, the rose-cutting garden and the secret garden... each, like his rooms, has its own distinctive character.

"It is the element of surprise I like," he says. "I do not like to see flowers from the house; it's vulgar

and it's boring and it's common. I stage-manage things so that you come upon them unexpectedly."

In London, the 61-year-old designer lives in Albany, Piccadilly. The flat has the masculine feel of a gentleman's club, and his wife, he admits, is much more at home in the country, where she can sleep in a bedroom of airy apricot instead of in the dramatically canopied red bed that is the focal point of the flat.

His wife, Lady Pamela, is daughter of the late Earl Mountbatten of Burma, and portraits and mementoes of his distinguished in-laws dominate both homes. In the pot garden, which contains "the only chestnut hedge in the world", there is a commemorative head of his mother-in-law surrounded by seashells. Even the roses are varieties named after his wife's relatives: "Lord Louis, the Princess von Hessen and Lady Rosemary, my niece, are growing there." But he does not talk to his plants. "That's absolute rubbish," he says. "I just go around talking to myself about them, so it may sound as if I do."

He married in 1960. Wedding photographs, among them those of the Queen's wedding with Lady Pamela as a bridesmaid, and the Hicks' wedding attended by the royal family, are discreetly displayed on a landing. "I don't believe in wedding photographs on the grand piano," Mr Hicks says.

The year 1960 proved a significant one in many ways for Mr Hicks. That year he became the director of David Hicks Ltd,

and it was 11 years ago, and everything in the garden dates



Genius of the place: David Hicks does not like to see flowers from his house because "it's vulgar and it's boring and it's common". Instead, there is always the element of surprise

which today has outposts around the world. In that year, too, he bought "the big house" on the estate in whose dower house he and his wife now live. "We lived in luxury and style in the big house for 20 years," he says, "but it was too big after the three children were grown, and on weekends, it seemed like running a country hotel: you had to have at least eight other couples to stay or the place seemed empty, and you were pouring drinks all the time — you can't leave that to domestics." So he sold the house but kept most of the land, which is, he believes, "what matters".

That was 11 years ago, and everything in the garden dates

from then: "I was becoming more interested in garden design than house design," he says. Now the Hicks enjoy the company of a single couple at weekends, or invite friends from London for Sunday lunch, cooked by their innovative young chef.

In both homes there is a strong sense of history and family. Mr Hicks shows off the certificates that have proclaimed five generations of his family to be Freemen of the City of London and Masters of the Salters' Company, dating from the reign of George III. His son, Ashley, is training as an architect in America and his daughter, India, is a photographer. Mr Hicks does all his own

flower arranging, although "now she's getting better at it" he allows occasionally. Clumps of dried gypsophila, hydrangeas and magnolias decorate the drawing room — a light, feminine room in complete contrast to the London flat — and individual roses are arranged in clear plastic film canisters.

"It is hell living with a designer," he acknowledges in the study which more than any other room in the country house echoes the feeling of the London flat. It is wallpapered, in the only part not covered with books, with a piece of his grandmother's russet velvet dress.

"The moment I go into a room I

know exactly what I want to do to it," he says, and Lady Pamela, he insists, is happy to leave all the design decisions to him. But he shudders slightly at the writing desk she insisted upon, whose homely clutter mars what would otherwise have been the clean lines of a magnificent reception hall, with windows looking out on his carefully orchestrated views.

An awkward ramp leads from the hallway to the dining room. Mr Hicks explains this is because the dining-room floor needed to be dug out so that the ceiling could be lowered to conceal a beam which would have clashed with the classical lines of the turquoise and grey Rex Whistler room,

Painted for Lady Mountbatten in

"I like," he says. "I do not like to see flowers from the house; it's vulgar

and it's boring and it's common".

Instead, there is always the element of surprise

1935 and painstakingly reconstructed, panel by panel. As the new room is smaller, the mural had to be squeezed in by concealing the doors behind the painted panels. There are other concealed doors and *trompe-l'oeil* tricks in the house, which was a farmhouse when it was built in 1800. The television is hidden under a skirted table.

Mr Hicks is not keen to talk

about his interior design business.

"I'm immersed in garden matters," he says. "In fact, I cannot think why I go to the city at all any more. I don't much like London."

VICTORIA MCKEE

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WEEKEND LIVING: IN TOWN

Astronomers say overlit cities block out the stars. Others take a dimmer view, says Nicola Murphy

On the first day God said: "Let there be light." On Monday, Cliff Richard will make a similar pronouncement as he turns on London's Oxford Street Christmas decorations, adding a few megawatts to the artificial light with which we lighten the darkness in our cities and along main roads.

Dazzled, we all agree that "wisdom excels folly as far as light excelleth darkness" (Ecclesiastes 2:13). All of us, that is, except the astronomers who are campaigning for Dark Skies 2000. They are fighting against "light pollution".

In the run up to National Astronomy Week (November 17-24), stargazers have become increasingly frustrated as night after night man-made, multi-coloured ephemeral "stars" have exploded from bonfire night rockets and obscured all those little bears and big bears, ploughs and saucepans, crowns and crosses so valued by astronomers. "Fireworks are a terrible nuisance," says Linda Simonian of the National Astronomers' Centre. "But at least they are not there every night. 'Sky glow' is."

"Sky glow" is the shimmering orange haze above brightly lit cities and motorways, a haze that spreads higher and higher as light is scattered, bouncing from dust particle to dust particle. "Most people don't even notice that you can't see the stars any more," Ms Simonian says. "But if you do look up you don't see white on black, you see orange." And clearly orange skies at night are not an astronomer's delight.

"We've got to have somewhere to go," she says, and describes her vision of an ideal "black" future world as a place with "dark belts, like green belts", with signs reading: "No light beyond this point."

"Something has to happen. In the last 30 to 40 years sky glow has got worse and worse. They say that street lighting is important for crime prevention, but when you consider that lighting levels have been increasing tremendously, and so have crime levels, how can they be connected?"

Such an attitude does not find favour with Jackie Oguribe, from the Hammersmith/Fulham Women's Safe Transport Group, in London: "I don't see how anyone



The only stars in town: Regent Street after the Christmas lights came on this week — more bad news for astronomy

Red sky at night, M4 alight

can put astronomy before peoples' lives," she says. "Once it is dark it is dangerous out there. People say that if they can't be driven, they won't go out. They won't risk the walk to the bus stop."

Ms Oguribe does not believe there has been any noticeable improvement in the number of street lights. She moved to another area in order to be able to walk home on property in streets. "Before I had to run all the way from the tube. Why should I have to do that? What kind of equal opportunities do we have in this country if one group can dictate lighting the streets? Darkness is terrifying."

That the public does equate safety with brighter lights was made apparent in the second Islington crime survey, published last February. Conducted among a random selection of 1,680 residents of the London borough, the survey has focused on the London borough of Wandsworth, which has spent five years

believing poor street lighting is a major cause of crime, that one in three women feels inadequate street lighting aids sex-related crimes and that four in ten women under 25 avoid going out alone after dark.

In the coming weeks experts

relighting the area in a programme that is now 80 per cent completed. Its street lamps, like the new "downlighters" in Islington, point downwards and sideways. They are not orange, but pink. So should astronomers pack up and move to Wandsworth? Not yet.

"Light which is angled downwards may well reflect off the pavement and back into the sky," says Nigel Pollard, the British representative on the Commission Internationale de l'Éclairage (International Commission on Illuminations). In addition to dealing with the problems of "obstructive lighting" (including trains, sports stadium floodlights and lights overlooking bedrooms), CIE has a division for attending to the needs of astronomers. In September Division 4 of the CIE went to York to listen to stargazers.

"We gave them a forum and now it's up to the astronomers to arrange tests, quantify the problem and provide us with scientific data so that we will be able to decide what to do with street lights," Mr Pollard says. In response to the CIE's request, the National Astronomy Centre is organising a survey.

Mr Pollard, who is also the principal engineer of Westminster council's public lighting department, anticipates that the borough councils will be sympathetic to all new suggestions. "Lighting in London is inefficient," he says. "And now that the councils have to become increasingly cost-conscious they will be looking for ways to save on their lighting bills."

In the meantime, Christmas lights are going up and the skies of London will not be getting any darker. "It's Scrooges to complain about the lights," says Pat Poole, from the Oxford Street Association. "They're lovely and we've got no intention of choosing any alternative decoration."

'Most people do not notice that you cannot see the stars any more'

from Southampton university will also publish their views on the relationship between street lighting and crime. The report will record the findings of a detailed independent study which has focused on the London borough of Wandsworth, which has spent five years

and provide us with scientific data so that we will be able to decide what to do with street lights," Mr Pollard says. In response to the CIE's request, the National Astronomy Centre is organising a survey.

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Help: the Murder My Lord troupe

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"We research our client thoroughly and work personal gossip and scandal into the plot so every show is different," says Mr Panto, who read English and law at Cambridge before becoming an actor.

He remembers the oil company executive who wanted the script to hinge on his arguments with his American parent company over greater investment; the metal-trading company where the managing director suggested he sell plutonium to the Russians to give the plot a twist; and another corporate bash where a model who had appeared in the company's advertisements pretended to have had an affair with the marketing supremo.

So painstaking is the preparation that game-for-a-laugh executives are even encouraged to pose in bed with the actress who provides the sexual frisson and the photos are then used as "clues" or evidence of blackmail.

Although nobody could possibly suspect the rotund Mr Panto (who usually appears as a detective, disguised in a long blonde wig and waitress' outfit) was anything but an actor, other actors often appear at the event in much more plausible guises.

VICTORIA MCKEE

• *Murder My Lord* can be contacted at Britannia House, 1-11 Glenthorne Road, London W6 0LF (081-846 9491). Bookings are being taken now for Christmas parties.



Just kidding: the secret of Clive Panto's murderous success, he says, is that he does a great deal of research before laying out the bodies

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THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10 1990

WEEKEND LIVING: COLLECTING

BY SARAH JANE CHECKLAND

Old master of fortune?

A painting bought in a job lot at auction in America may prove to be a lost work by the elusive Venetian artist Giorgione

When John Harrington first came to London proclaiming his "discovery" of a great Venetian painting, art historians greeted him with tongues in cheeks and fingers in ears. Here was a strange painting of two men and a boy in frozen tableau conferring over a sheet of music, being championed by a strange American with a yarn about being "psychically directed" to an Atlanta auction house in 1961.

Having bought the painting in a \$300 job lot, the former marine and self-confessed millionaire says that chance meetings in a pub and a public library produced the information that his painting was once owned by a 16th century English ambassador to Venice, who carried it home to Cumberland in 1538. No wonder those art historians demurred.

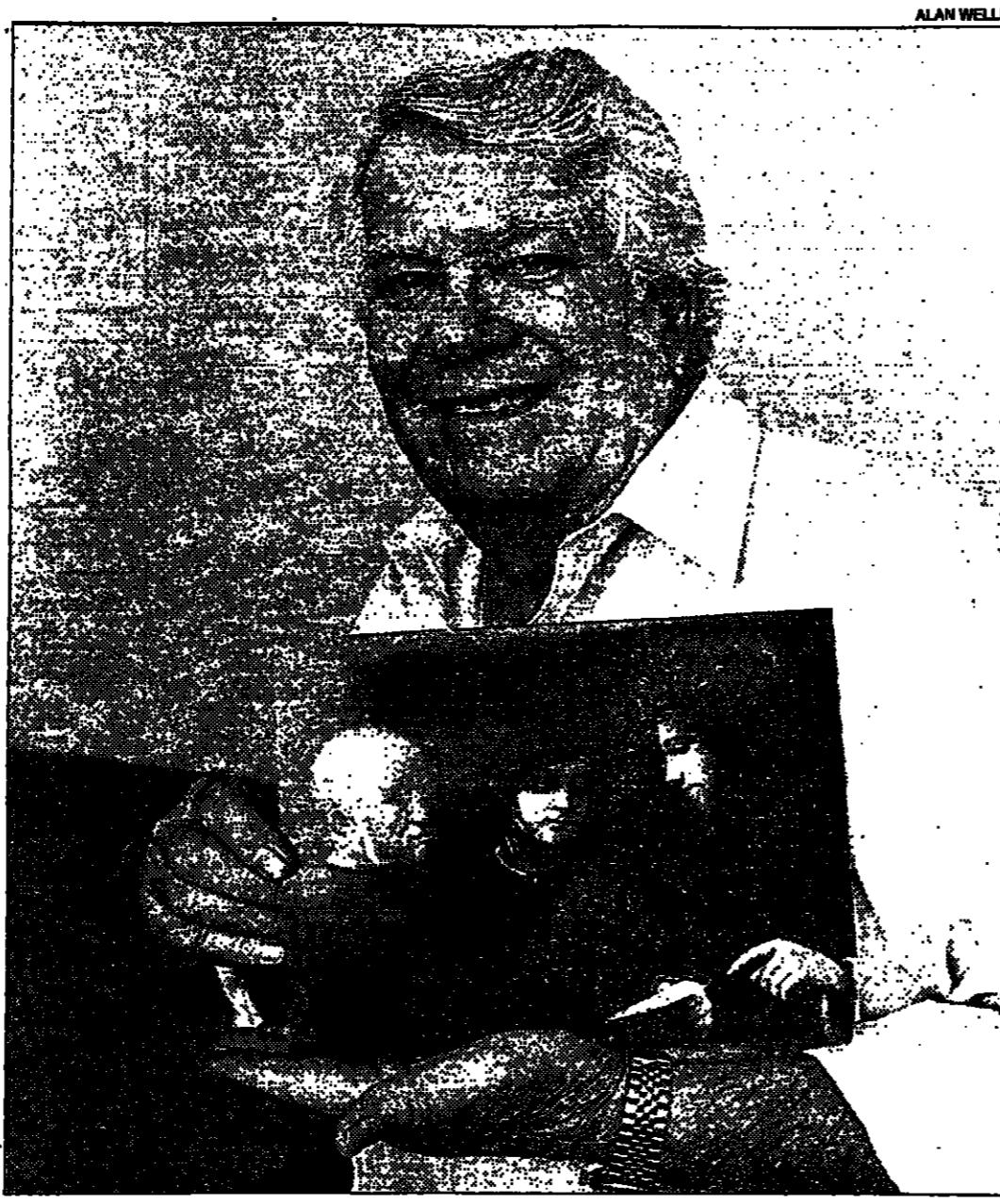
Now, after two years' research, the tables are turning dramatically. Mr Harrington's painting is being seriously considered as a lost work by Giorgione, who is credited with inspiring the Venetian High Renaissance before dying of the plague, aged 30, in 1510.

If the painting is by Giorgione, it could be the find of the century, and worth tens of millions of pounds. Only five works are confidently attributed to him, and none has come up for auction.

Suddenly everyone is Mr Harrington's friend, from the American collector Armand Hammer (who has asked to exhibit the work among his collection of Leonards when he opens a new museum in Los Angeles next year) to leading galleries at Yale and in Vienna, who have also asked for the painting on loan.

At his home in Osprey, Florida, Mr Harrington is busy proving that the painting, 24½in by 30½in, is a genuine Giorgione. First, he commissioned pigment analysis by the McCrone Research Institute of Chicago, which concluded: "Everything about the painting is entirely consistent with the period during which Giorgione painted."

Inspection by the conservator John Bertalan of Birmingham,



Lost and found? John Harrington and photograph of the possible Giorgione, which he bought for \$300 in 1961

Alabama, confirmed that the painting is largely unrestored, comprising layers of original varnish and a probable layer of 18th or 19th century varnish on top.

Bill Cummings, a researcher at Newcastle University enlisted by Mr Harrington, says local records confirm that the painting was brought to England around 1538 by John Legh of Isel Hall, Cumberland, at that time ambassador to Venice. Mr Harrington has affidavits from descendants that the "Giorgione" was still in Isel Hall in the Twenties.

Stella Mary Newton, the British costume expert connected with

the Courtauld Institute, stated that the garments in the painting were, in her opinion, "painted from life", the central figure's shirt having both a button on the front and a "convincing edge" to it, while the seam on the scarlet coat of the left-hand figure (a crabby old senator looking sternly at the viewer) is "in exactly the right place". Finally, the peculiar detail whereby his white undergarment is hitched up over his ear is so "inexplicable" that "it couldn't be a 17th century copy", she says.

All these factors, and comparison with another painting of the same subject at the Pitti Palace in

Florence, were then drawn together into a paper by Dr Klara Garas of Budapest University. The Pitti Palace version, she says, was once in the great Vendramin collection in Venice, along with Giorgione's famous paintings *The Tempest* and *An Old Woman*, which are in the Accademia gallery in Venice today.

Both the Pitti and Mr Harrington's paintings have the same subject, she says, but rather than being "The Three Ages of Man" as long assumed, they depict "Marcus Aurelius studying with two philosophers" — showing the Roman prodigy, already a member of

the priests' college, not needing music at his inauguration ceremony because he already knew the songs by heart. "The link between humanistic ideas, the interest for antiquity and the love of music leads us unambiguously to Giorgione," she writes. "At that time there was in Venice only Giorgione who could have created this composition."

The final boost to Mr Harrington's research has been the apparent demolition of the Pitti version, following scientific analysis, and subsequent restoration last year.

Mr Harrington's painting is well preserved, but the Pitti version is not. Tests, Dr Garas says, prove that although every detail points "to a date probably not later than 1506 when Giorgione's style was said to have changed", in many parts there was not much left of the work "except the preparation of the ground". Mrs Newton added this week that the costumes in Mr Harrington's picture are "more convincing" than those in the Pitti version.

Mr Harrington could not have

found himself a more elusive artist to nail down than Giorgione, who is more myth than man, in terms of what is known about him. Vasari, the 16th century biographer of artists, initially puts him alongside Leonardo as one of the founders of "modern" painting and explaining that he was nicknamed "Big George... because of his physical appearance and his moral and intellectual stature".

Vasari then defuses his claims by confusing Giorgione with his pupil Titian, attributing one particular work to both of them.

Over the centuries, a number of works believed to be by Big George have been demoted. Some are accepted by certain scholars but rejected by others. Only one painting is signed and dated.

"Under these circumstances, it is hardly possible to go further in the attribution... than to say we feel it is very close to Giorgione's style and spirit, and we think the concept, the composition, must be entirely his," Dr Garas concludes.

The true identity of the subject remains locked within it. Why, Mrs Newton asks, is the figure on the right hirsute and wearing green — both sartorial details banned in Venice in the early 16th century? Could he be a Muslim? If so, what is he doing with Marcus Aurelius? Mr Harrington can take comfort that even Giorgione's contemporaries often had no idea what his paintings meant.

Quitting the land of the living

Contemporary art's American silly season has finally got the saleroom brush-off

THE American contemporary art market — scene of the silliest speculation of all in recent years, with buyers gambling Impressionist prices for works on which the paint has scarcely dried — fell flat on its face this week. Perhaps posterity, rather than the pocket books, will now be allowed to play its part in the assessment of this composition.

The final boost to Mr Harrington's research has been the apparent demolition of the Pitti version, following scientific analysis, and subsequent restoration last year.

Mr Harrington's painting is well preserved, but the Pitti version is not. Tests, Dr Garas says, prove that although every detail points "to a date probably not later than 1506 when Giorgione's style was said to have changed", in many parts there was not much left of the work "except the preparation of the ground". Mrs Newton added this week that the costumes in Mr Harrington's picture are "more convincing" than those in the Pitti version.

Mr Harrington could not have

found himself a more elusive artist to nail down than Giorgione, who is more myth than man, in terms of what is known about him. Vasari, the 16th century biographer of artists, initially puts him alongside Leonardo as one of the founders of "modern" painting and explaining that he was nicknamed "Big George... because of his physical appearance and his moral and intellectual stature".

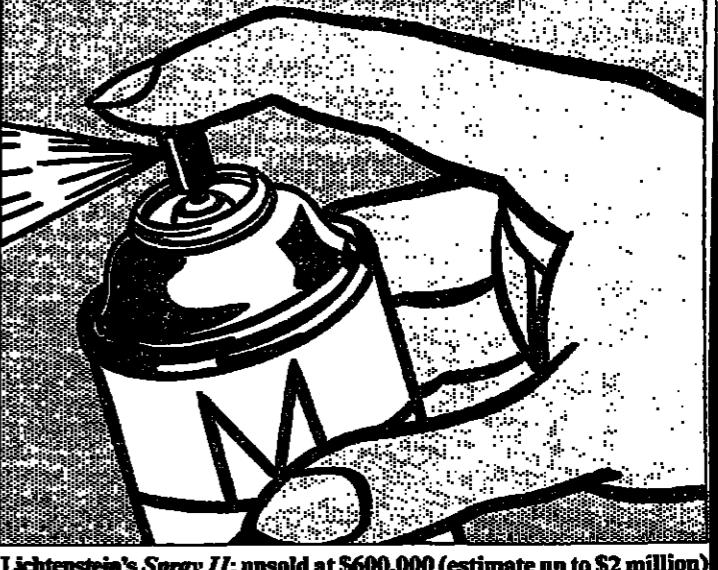
Vasari then defuses his claims by confusing Giorgione with his pupil Titian, attributing one particular work to both of them.

Over the centuries, a number of works believed to be by Big George have been demoted. Some are accepted by certain scholars but rejected by others. Only one painting is signed and dated.

"Under these circumstances, it is hardly possible to go further in the attribution... than to say we feel it is very close to Giorgione's style and spirit, and we think the concept, the composition, must be entirely his," Dr Garas concludes.

The true identity of the subject remains locked within it. Why, Mrs Newton asks, is the figure on the right hirsute and wearing green — both sartorial details banned in Venice in the early 16th century? Could he be a Muslim? If so, what is he doing with Marcus Aurelius? Mr Harrington can take comfort that even Giorgione's contemporaries often had no idea what his paintings meant.

Both the Pitti and Mr Harrington's paintings have the same subject, she says, but rather than being "The Three Ages of Man" as long assumed, they depict "Marcus Aurelius studying with two philosophers" — showing the Roman prodigy, already a member of



Lichtenstein's 'Spray II': unsold at \$600,000 (estimate up to \$2 million)

Atkinson Grimshaw

Mellow fruitfulness in season



Prized Victorian values: *Goddess of Night* by Atkinson Grimshaw, an evocative winter scene

IF EVER there was a painter of the English autumn, of evening and the promise of lights in the windows of warm houses, of moonlight cutting through clouds and branches to gleam on damp pavements and fallen leaves, it was Atkinson Grimshaw (1836-1893).

Grimshaw was born in Leeds to parents with no interest in art. The boy was put to work as a railway ticket clerk and forbidden to paint. In 1858, however, he married his cousin Theodosia, who gave him every encouragement, and his poetic visions and Yorkshire landscapes soon found a market.

Grimshaw was a much more varied artist than might be assumed from his best-known works. His early paintings were in a detailed, Pre-Raphaelite manner; from about 1879 he painted his popular dock scenes and at the end he produced nocturnes of anchored ships and beach scenes. There were also paintings of his wife and of Agnes Leefe, his favourite model.

After his death, Grimshaw's work disappeared from view. By the Sixties his work was usually rejected by sale rooms as being of too little value and only two London dealers, Lady Abby and Charlotte

Frank, were enthusiasts. Then Christopher Wood, who was building a Victorian department at Christie's, took up the cause. On becoming a dealer himself he organised two Grimshaw exhibitions in 1976, the first in Harrogate, the second in London. Now Mr Wood has joined Richard Green to arrange a large West End exhibition.

The change in Grimshaw's

standing is reflected in the prices demanded in 1976

plus some oddities, such as a wayward, or 18th century surveyor's pedometer.

Monday and Tuesday: A competing contents sale organised by Christie's is taking place a couple of counties away at Cold Overton Hall, Oakham. The Jacobean house itself, with about four acres, is on the market through Savills at just under £1 million.

Tuesday: This is English week for paintings in London, starting with some watercolour gems at Christie's, including Turner's newly rediscovered *Turner's London* of around 1825 (estimate £20,000 to £30,000). Of greater topographic, if lesser artistic, interest is the Cort's 1792 *Whitehall* (a mere £600 to

about £300) and today (£15,000 to £150,000). The most expensive offering at the latest exhibition is a rare interior, which must count, the organisers say, as the most important discovery of the exhibition. It is *The Cradle Song of 1787*, showing Agnes Leefe, who was governess to the Grimshaws' 16 children as well as the artist's model, with a cradle at her feet.

Grimshaw encouraged his children to paint. Those

who works are most often found on the market are Louis, Arthur, Elaine and Wilfred. Given their father's change of fortunes, their work (and that of Grimshaw's followers, notably Wilfred Jenkins, Walter Meegan and Samuel Wagstaff) might now be worth seeking out.

HUON MALLALIEU

• The exhibition is at the Rich and Green Gallery, 39 Dover Street, W1, until November 23.

£800). There are also paintings and watercolours at Sotheby's Sussex, including a group by woman artists. Dod Proctor's *Virginia* is like a plumply innocent *Venus* by Cranach (£20,000 to £30,000).

Wednesday: The star of the week should be Constable with *The Lock* at Sotheby's (£10 million to £15 million, or anyone's guess). He is ably backed by Hogarth, Zoffany, Gainsborough, Gilbert Stuart and Lawrence. Phillips has an example of the Cinematograph, the world's first movie camera, patented in 1895 (£6,000 to £8,000).

Wednesday and Thursday: It is time that ceramics sales adopted the categories of "modern British" and "con-

temporary" used for paintings. Bonhams has the former, that is, Leach to Rie, on Wednesday at 6pm, and the latter on Thursday at 11am.

Thursday: Sotheby's turn for Turner, with a watercolour view of 1819 showing what was shortly to become Buckingham Palace (up to £30,000), also a Welsh panel by Samuel Palmer (up to £35,000).

At Christie's King Street there is English furniture in the morning, while South Kensington has Leicas and other cameras and equipment at 2pm, and topographical paintings at 5pm.

Friday: The English picture week ends on an American note, with Benjamin West's portrait of General Monkton (£1 million to £1.5 million) at Christie's.

• Holloway's, 49 Parsons Street, Banbury, Oxfordshire (0295-231397). Christie's King Street, St James's (071-339 9060). Sotheby's, Sussex, Summers Place, Billingshurst (0403-783933). Sotheby's, 35 New Bond Street, W1 (071-483 8080). Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, W1 (071-639 6602). Bonhams, Montpelier Street, SW7 (071-584 9161). Christie's, South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, SW7 (071-581 7611).

H.M.



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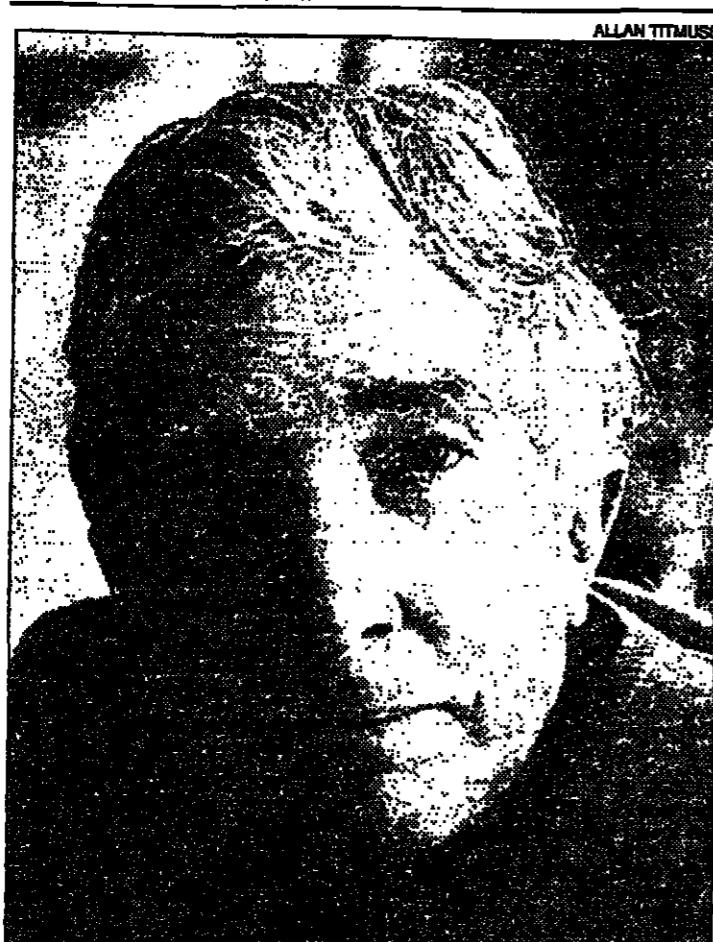
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ARTS

Updike: *Rabbit at Rest* is a "depressed book by a depressed man"

LITERATURE: NEW YORK

Rabbit as metaphor for America's decline

John Updike's recent novel has provoked an intense bout of self-examination in the United States. Charles Bremner reports

This has been a mournful autumn in America, with the bite of recession, expectations of war and rising petrol prices. Images of decline tumble daily from the media, comforting the gloom-mongers waiting for the economy to catch up with the moral collapse they have been diagnosing since the height of Reaganism.

For some, the ultimate proof was the television commercial in which a near-naked Madonna draped in the Stars and Stripes, cajoled younger citizens to vote with the promise that casting your ballot is "better than sex". For others it was the decision to exempt pupils from having to write a single word of their own in school-leaving exams. Anything but multiple-choice boxes was considered too demanding.

Down from the high of the Eighties, *Time* magazine argued this week that America had become addicted to ignorance: "Did the American Dream, all along, mean nothing more than the quest for painlessness?" That question could have come straight from Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, the anti-hero of John Updike's just-completed tetralogy of novels.

The last of these once-a-decade excursions through the state of America (published by Andre Deutsch in Britain, and reviewed in *The Times* on November 1). *Rabbit at Rest* has touched a raw nerve, unsettling reviewers and even prompting an editorial in the *New York Times*. The question exercising critics is whether Updike has gone too far in depicting the demise of the selfish, superficial Rabbit as a metaphor for the America that was born in the abundance of the post-war decade and, in Updike's view, ended with the 1989 revolutions.

In *Rabbit at Rest*, the one-time basketball star turned lecherous suburbanite, who first appeared in the 1959, succumbs to heart failure after 500 pages of morose reflection on his own and America's decline. Living half the year in Florida on the riches from his Toyota dealership, gorging on junk food, he is obsessed with decay. "Everything falling apart: airplanes, bridges, eight years under Reagan of nobody minding the

store, making money out of nothing, trusting in God." In a recurrent nightmare, he is haunted by the image of Pan Am Flight 103.

As Updike explains, this is "a depressed book about a depressed man written by a depressed man". He thinks the mood suits the "sense of weariness" now afflicting America. Everyone agrees that he has done a marvellous job of evoking the feel of the era, but his critics are uncomfortable about according literary merit to what they deem to be a catalogue of headlines, television programmes and clothing styles.

Tom Wolfe came in for similar criticism over *Bonfire of the Vanities*, which many saw as too

realist to qualify as art.

Louis Menand, writing in *Esquire*, allowed that *Rabbit*'s emptiness will present future historians with a key to the American Cold War psyche, but he chided Updike for producing a "Moby-Dickish encyclopaedia of American life". Menand is unhappy, one assumes, about such metaphorically loaded touches as having a

man from the Japanese car company visit Rabbit and demand repayment of the debt run up by his cocaine-addict son. "Isn't that how we see the Japanese, as the price we're paying for our sins?" the author retorts.

For Gary Wills, who dissected *Rabbit* in the *New York Review of Books*, Updike fails because his hero lacks "moral heft" and is given a voice that is implausibly perceptive for one of his uncouth behaviour and background. *The Wall Street Journal* congratulated Updike on the detail, but complained that "in setting himself up as the curator of the panoramic living museum that is America, he has left his hero standing somewhere outside the gates".

George Will, the conservative columnist, took a similar line, saying it was fun to ransack *Rabbit* for social diagnoses but he was unhappy with the view of a sclerotic America gorging itself on junk food. "Is America

mortal? Maybe, even probably, but not imminently," he said. Perhaps Updike was confusing his own condition with the world's.

The *New York Times* came to Updike's defence this week, wondering why he was getting "this bum's rush". The critics were revealing more about America's discontent with itself than about the novel, it mused. It ascribed part of the negative reaction to the snobbery of the literary world. Rabbit, a car salesman without a university degree, and unfashionably overweight to boot, was not a worthy subject for carrying a high moral message. Most of all, Harry Angstrom failed to transform himself as the taste of the video-age dictates, the paper suggested.

Updike, who says he has given Rabbit up with difficulty, dismisses the charges about putting high-flown ideas in the mind of a low-born hero. "Shakespeare had people talk in blank verse when they don't really," he said the other day. He now says he plans to write a novel about the 1970s, the pre-Aids time that he considers "something of a paradise lost".

Leading article, page 13

THEATRE

Eastern tables turned

NOBODY with a television and an interest in life will ever forget last autumn: the demos, the huge crowds, the glum functionaries ceding power to actors, authors and other such oddballs. But we have yet to hear, at least in any detail, what happened in the eyries and sancta where change was mooted and agreed. That is the gap David Edgar seeks to fill in his new play at the Cottesloe.

The result will not be to everybody's taste. Some may feel Edgar should spend more of his last act welcoming the arrival of freedom in Eastern Europe, and less hinting at the social perils he believes it brings. Some may be disoriented by the shifts and swerves of a play that consists almost entirely of meetings. Some may wish the hubbub of the streets was not simply background to the minutes Edgar has taken on the negotiations of 1989. Some may itch for less talk, more event.

Still, the play makes an honourable contribution to the department of East European studies that our left-leaning dramatists seem to be opening. It lacks the sweep and impressionistic verve of *Carol Churchill's Mad Forest*. It also lacks the simple-mindedness of Howard Brenton and Tariq Ali's crawling homage to Gorbachev, *Moscow Gold*. Edgar's aim is less imaginatively ambitious than the one, more complex than the other, to present the case-study of an unwilling suicide; to suggest how the communists were manouevred onto the poli-

Benedict Nightingale
reviews the latest
Edgar play: *The Shape of the Table*

tical sill and why they jumped.

While Churchill's setting is Romania, and Brenton's Russia, Edgar's setting is a capsule country with obvious similarities to Czechoslovakia. The party chief, Stratford Johns's elephantic Lutz, has ruled ever since a Soviet invasion undid the reforms of the liberal communist, John Ringham's Spassov. A writer turned window-cleaner turned political prisoner, Karl Johnson's unassuming but unyielding Prus, pushes a coalition called Public Platform to power and himself to the presidency. The change of names may seem evasive, but it gives Edgar the freedom to speculate without risk of demur.

He certainly knows how meetings operate, and takes a grandmaster's delight in a canny attack or elegant knight-fork. The communists are themselves divided, except for the Lutz faction, lacking in self-belief; but they still imagine they can fend off democracy by adding the odd "tend to" or "consider" to their declarations. They opt for what they think are superficial concessions, tactical retreats, figleaf alliances, only to self-destruct under the fear of close scrutiny of

their history. To adjust the metaphor, they try to trick evolution into seeing them as other than dinosaurs and, naturally, they fail.

The play's title is also its set, and the set its meaning. Only a thin cloth conceals the fact that the huge object stage-centre is a cluster of little tables, not a single vast one. A similar point is nicely made when everybody intones what seems to be the same national anthem, but actually has different words depending on the politics of the singer. Yet Edgar's dialogue is not always as clear as his imagery when it comes to showing the coming of pluralism.

Part of the problem may be Jenny Killick's direction. It produces several performances that seem self-conscious and studied, and only one that is impressively incisive: Stephen Boxer's adenoial, ingratiating Interior Minister. It fails to get the menace and burly charisma from Johns his part demands, and lets him react to the loss of supreme power with body-language so mild it would not unsettle a mosquito. Yet Edgar's language has its ponderous, obfuscating moments, too. It is fair to object to an ending which allows the disgraced Lutz, of all people, to lecture Prus about the danger of losing his ideals, becoming compromised by office, and so on? It might seem so, especially as the writer-president also stands accused of playing Pandora with a country whose national box includes skinheads wanting to gas gypsies. Yet Edgar

Set for confrontation: Old forces meet new in *The Shape of the Table*

is no clockwork marxist. Indeed, one of his strengths is his willingness to embrace contradiction.

As he sees it, Lutz can be devious, corrupt and far worse, yet it still challenges the brancards. What is liberating for some may

create new insecurities for others, and still be right and necessary.

Shape of the Table may be dry beside Edgar's best work, but it still challenges the brancards.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THANKS to a delayed pen-
sion, a French *demi-mondaine*
and an Italian music festival,
an audience at the Barbican this
week heard a rare piece of
late Rossini, which warmed
the core of an otherwise
sombre November evening in
the City.

Giovanna d'Arco, a little-
known but appropriately fiery
dramatic *gran scena* for sop-
rano, was written after *William Tell* and before Rossini
moved back to Italy, assured
of his state pension. At this
time, his own late flowering
brought him to Balzac's mistress, no
less. She it was who fanned the
flame of inspiration for his
treatment of the Joan of Arc
story.

The piece remained as silent
as the dedication, partly
because the score was jealously
guarded by Rossini, and
partly because the piano-
accompaniment version struck
too few sparks for its subject-
matter. But when the distinguished
mezzo Teresa Berganza wanted
half a programme's worth of
orchestral and vocal Rossini for
the Pescara festival in 1989, the
composer Salvatore Sciarrino
obliged by providing an
"elaborazione per orchestra"
of the original.

- Not a trace of Sciarrino's
own theatrical experimentation,
and yet a great deal of his
virtuoso instrumental sophis-

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Rossini reclaimed

tication, was brought to bear.
Sciarrino shows that he knows
Rossini inside-out: the orchestra
forces are authentic, and
the sonorities true, not only to
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of Rossini's own inspired
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What is more, both the
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stage in her career. A bassoon
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flare of a climax is happily met, mid-voice and
brightened with brass; wood-
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way into coloratura for a
cabaret of triumph.

This was *vittoria* indeed.
for *Giovanna* and its com-
poser, for Sciarrino and
for Berganza, and Paavo Berg-
lund went on to conduct the
London Symphony Orchestra in
a performance of Sib-
tius's First Symphony that was
no less burning in its
conviction.

HILARY FINCH



Lustros: Berganza

DANCE

Steamy memories in motion

A SENSE of urgency pervades Siobhan Davies' *Different Trains*, and it is packed with activity. The remarkable thing is that with so much going on all the time, both music and dance remain clearly focused.

Steve Reich's score provides the driving force, with the four musicians in the pit playing swift, short phrases, up to three more layers of recorded string quartets superimposed, voices making flat statements that are repeated rhythmically, and sounds of trains interrupting all through. All this finds a parallel in the events on stage.

The choreographer uses

much swift movement, often with a risky off-balance quality, but she also (as she explained in this paper on Thursday) introduces a gestural element developed from sign language. Frequently there is a kind of frozen conversation in one part of the stage as contrast with the busy dance elsewhere. Another recurring motif is of two dancers sinking to the ground balanced against each other as if for comfort as well as for support.

At the back of the stage, David Buckland has placed a high wall, patterned with the ends of cylinders, against it two big, irregularly shaped

fans revolve. These objects reveal different textures and colouring as Peter Mumford's lighting changes, also affecting the atmosphere on stage, with especially chilling effect at the end of the central sequence.

The motive behind the shape and tone of the work is the text (printed in the programme because not all of it is easy to hear). During the first part, reassuring adults make remarks about train journeys in the United States 50 years ago. In part two, the same banal, matter-of-fact tone continues, but what the voices are describing is the experience of the Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe: Davies and her collaborators respond to this with a chilled bleakness. The final section brings together both elements in the music and dance for a difficult reconciliation in memory.

The six dancers are Davies' usual team, their individual qualities sharpened and reinforced by collective purpose. They and the Smith Quartet perform *Different Trains* in a way that makes the most of its gripping intensity. *Different Trains* has another performance at Sadler's Wells tonight.

JOHN PERCIVAL

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HILARY FINCH

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SUNDAY'S TELEVISION & RADIO

COMPILED BY PETER DEAR AND GILLIAN MAXEY



The splitting image: Melvyn Bragg (10.35pm)

BBC 1

8.45 Through the Garden Gates. Nurseryman Dennis Cornish visits Woofordsworthy and Dartington Hall, to find out how they reflect the revival of the herbaceous border (r) 9.15 A Vous la France! French for beginners series (r). Wales (to 12.30) See You Sunday 9.40 Espana Viva. Spanish studies (r) 10.05 Business Matters. The second of two special reports on eastern Europe presented by John Humphrys (r) 10.30 The Centophob. The Queen commemorates Remembrance Sunday by laying a wreath of red poppies at the Centophob in memory of those who lost their lives in two world wars 11.55 Approx This Is The Day. Linda Mary Evans looks at viewers' letters for Remembrance Sunday 12.05 See Here! A special edition for Remembrance Sunday comes from Manchester, where a church service has been recorded by the deaf for a hearing audience 12.30 Country File. John Craven reports from Ireland where farmers are fearing a gold rush in the countryside. Wales (from 12.25) Weather 1.00 News with Morna Stuart. Followed by On The Record. How far is the Labour party prepared to go towards European economic and monetary union? Jonathan Dimbleby talks to Gerald Kaufman, the party's foreign affairs spokesman 2.00 EastEnders (r). (Ceefax) 3.05 The Flintstones. Cartoon (r) 3.30 Smash Hits Poll Winners' Party. Philip Schofield reports live from the London Arena, Docklands. Simultaneous broadcast with Radio 1

5.00 The Clothes Show. Pauline Quirk and Linda Robson, stars of Birds of a Feather, have outfits chosen for them 5.25 Hearts of Gold. Esther Rantzen and Michael Grotw present the programme which is really *Candid Camera* meets *That's Life*. Joining the presenters are Dame Vera Lynn, Janet Brown, Desmond Wilcox and the ubiquitous Paul Gascoigne 6.10 Sun Chance. Carol Vorderman investigates the world of risk and probability. (Ceefax) 6.20 News with Morna Stuart. Weather 6.35 Songs of Praise for Remembrance from Crucifix Wharf, Malta, presented by Marlyn Lewis. (Ceefax)



Below stairs: Paul Staines, Su Pollard (7.15pm)

7.15 You Rang M'Lord? © CHOICE: No one will suggest that the upstairs/downstairs sitcom is anything but the lightest of soaps, conducted for the most part in the tradition of farce, and yet there is more than hint of social criticism for those who want to pick it up. The

2.20 Troubleshooter. Swimming against the tide. Former ICI chairman Sir John Harvey-Jones advises the family-run Morgan Motor Company, which wants to increase production (r)

3.00 Film: The Searchers (1956, b/w). © CHOICE: John Ford's remarkable western largely abandons the optimistic populism of his earlier work and charts the bitter quest of Ethan Edwards (John Wayne) for his young niece (Natalie Wood), kidnapped by Comanche Indians after a raid on the Edwards ranch. The strength of the family group, evident in such Ford films as *The Grapes of Wrath* and *How Green Was My Valley*, has disappeared, leaving Edwards as an outsider. Ward Bond's priest offers some typical Fordian horse-play but there is less of it than usual and this is a sombre, uncomfortable film which refuses to offer neat resolutions. The grandeur of Winton C. Heyen's photography is partly lost on the television screen but not the poignant Max Steiner score. The dialogue is simple but interesting, compares with that of *The Third Man* in being one of the most effective images of refection in the history of the cinema. (Ceefax)

5.00 Rugby Special. Highlights of Scotland v Argentina at Murrayfield and Bath v Harlequins. Wales: Rugby Special Wales, Northern Ireland: Rugby Special Northern Ireland

6.00 Julie Box-Jones. Julie Holland invites Trevor and Simon from *Gong Live*, Nell Campbell, Brian Travers and Helen Campbell. Brian Wood to judge the week's latest books

6.35 The Money Programme. Peter Jay talks to John Major about the country's economic prospects

Twenties may be roaring for the idle rich but pointed reference is also made to the three million unemployed and Paul Shanes' butter continues to be a spokesman for the revolution that will knock Lord Melodium and his ilk off their perch for good. As Madam's brother, the randy Teddy, is sent to work in the family rubber factory to keep his mind off cheating chambordams, most of us will be urging his fellow workers to rub his nose in it. As before the double entendres come thick and fast and Su Pollard's naive tweety gets many of the best lines. She delivers them to perfection

8.05 Howards' Way. The money-grubbing story of nautical folk. (Ceefax) 9.00 The Green Man. The conclusion of the ludicrous but compelling Kingfisher Amis ghost story adapted by Malcolm Bradbury, with a marvellous performance by Alan Alda as the dim, wonky-thinking Maurice. (Ceefax)

9.50 News with Michael Buerk. Weather

10.05 Heart of the Matter: Unfinished Business. Joan Bakewell meets former Allied prisoners of war who are hoping for compensation after being used as slave labour in a German factory that produced the gas used by the Nazis in the Holocaust

10.40 The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd. American sitcom about an accident-prone real estate woman. Starring Barbara Brown

11.05 Clean Slate. A repeat of Thursday's edition magazine introduced by Jackie Stedman

11.35 Mahabharat: Episode 26 (r)

12.15 Sun Weather

ITV LONDON

6.00 TV-am with, at 8.00, Frost on Sunday. Today's guests include Alastair Morton. The newspapers are reviewed by Derek Jameson and Carol Thatcher

9.25 The Disney Club. Entertainment for the young presented by John Ecclestone, Andrea Boardman and Gordon Inglis

10.15 Link: Parenting USA. American legislation makes it difficult for a child to be adopted by severely disabled people. Kevin Mullern takes to some happy parents who have been successful

10.30 Remembrance Day Service from St Mary's, Ovingham, Northumberland

11.30 Oh, What a Lovely Town! A special film for Remembrance Sunday which follows old soldier Jack Norman back to the fields of Flanders

12.00 The Human Factor. Rosemary Harris meets relatives of Greek Cypriots who have been missing since Turkey occupied the island 16 years ago

12.30 LWT News Weekend. News and features from around the Thames area

1.00 News with Fiona Armstrong. Weather

1.10 Walker. Brian Wilde interviews the defence secretary, Tom King

2.00 Cheltenham Anglers. Tom and dated Ameri's cheltenham about three glamorous women who work for a covert law enforcement agency (r)

2.55 The Match. Live coverage of the first division match at Maine Road between Manchester City and Leeds United

5.05 Sunday Sunday. Glyn Hurnford is on the afternoon chat show by actress Shirley MacLaine, former Beatle George Harrison, actor and director Dennis Hopper and singer George Benson

6.00 The River Thames. Continuing the series about London's river. This week's programme includes archive footage of Tower Bridge, opened in

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Transworld Sport (r) 7.00

7.00 Coronation Street 11.25 The Road 12.30 Club Nights 1.00 Spy 2.00

8.00 The West 10.00 The ITV Chat Show

9.15 The Trials of Life: Homeaking. Sir David Attenborough's series looks at the varied and ingenious ways in which animals secure a home for themselves, including the aggressive

negotiations for property exchange between hermit crabs and the air-conditioning system developed by prairie dogs. (Ceefax)

9.50 Not Only... But Also... (b/w)

Vintage Sixties comedy from Peter Cook and Dudley Moore, with guest Menah Montgomery (r) (Ceefax)

9.25 Hippo. The Swimming Machine

This edition of the series about post-war Japan examines the nation's system of education. In terms of education, Japan's achievement scores highest in the world; holidays are short, school lasts for six days a week, and 94 per cent of children stay at school until they are 18.

9.35 The Cenotaph. Highlights of this morning's parade and service in Whitehall

10.40 Film: Pennies from Heaven (1981). Dazzling Hollywood version of Dennis Potter's bitter-sweet television series about the life and dreams of a sheet music salesman in the Thirties.

Potter himself wrote the screenplay, transposing the story into an American setting, and the musical numbers (with the actors miming to old recordings) are staged with panache. But the film completely misses the raw-edged quality of the original. Steve Marin plays the Bob Hoskins' wife, with Jessica Harper as the straight-faced wife and Bemsie Peters as the teacher who falls from grace. Directed by Herbert Ross.

12.25pm Dance Energy. News from the world of dance with Normand 1.05 Rapido (r). Ends at 1.40

1.00, and film of the digging of the Dartford Tunnel. Narrated by Gavin Weightman

6.30 News with Fiona Armstrong. Weather 6.35 LWT News and weather

6.40 Highway. Sir Harry Secombe visits Imber, deep in the heart of Salisbury Plain

7.15 Close To Home. Bland comedy series starring Paul Nicholas as a vet with domestic problems. With Pipa Guard and Angharad Rees. (Oracle)

7.45 The Ruth Rendell Mysteries: An Unkindness Of Ravens. When an unfaithful husband is discovered dead and buried in a wood, another case is opened for Wexford to investigate. (Oracle)

8.45 News with Fiona Armstrong. Weather 9.00 LWT Weather

9.05 London's Summing. Blue Watch

experiences a hectic night duty, when it is called to a fire in a dustbin, a stuck lift and a pregnant cat up a tree. (Oracle)

10.05 Spitting Image. Nobody is safe as the latex puppets return with a new series, poking fun at the famous, the not so famous and events in the news

10.35 The South Bank Show. Springtime Image

© CHOICE: Video game comedy confronts the real offices as Alan Bennett's film looks back at seven years of savage comedy. Most are pretty good about it, considering. Steve Davis and Roy Hattersley enter fully into the spirit. Sir David Steel is generous, although he feels his depiction as David Owen's lackey was political

damaging. Only Edward Heath utterly fails to see the joke. The film is partly an illustrated discourse on how the Springtime Image team do it and partly an attempt to judge their effectiveness. Hattersley reckons the show only has an impact when it is saying what is true anyway. The film's title is

itself an irony: *Springtime* is biased against

democracy, decency and reasonable behaviour. Harry Enfield's voice of Sir David, Douglas Henshall's Jimmy Greaves) thinks that much of the humour is a bit boyish. Steve Nallon confirms his reputation as the nation's best impersonator of Margaret Thatcher

11.35 Comics, the Ninth Art. Continuing the series on the history of comics

12.10pm The ITV Chart Show (r)

1.10 The Time Turnel. The travellers find themselves on a Pacific island in 1945 and engaged in a deadly game with a Japanese plane. Starring Robert Colbert and James Darren (r)

2.05 Golf: PGA Tour 90. From the US, highlights of the Memorial Tournament

3.05 Pick of The Week. The best clips from last week's regional television, presented by James Wileman

3.35 Adventures. Breathtaking footage of man and the natural elements

4.00 The Silk Road. Documentary series about one of the ancient Asian trade routes (r)

5.00 ITN Morning News with Phil Roman. Ends at 6.00

background to patents serves as the framework for an examination of two celebrated cases. One involves the claim of a 12-year-old boy to have invented the sailboard, thus breaking the world monopoly of Windsurfer International. The other concerns the bitter, and still unresolved, legal battle over rival electrical devices for removing hair on women's legs. (Teletext)

8.00 American Football. The main game is Miami Dolphins at the New York Jets

9.30 The Madie Show. Red, Hot and Blue - Ads and the Media. The last of the current series looks at the making of *Red, Hot and Blue*, a 90-minute extravaganza built around interpretations of Cole Porter songs, for which Ads does

10.15 Film: Paper Moon (1973, b/w). Ryan O'Neal is a Thirties bistro owner running gullible waiters in the American mid-west, whose routine is given fresh credibility when he joins forces with his eager nine-year-old daughter (Tatum O'Neal, who won an Oscar for her performance). Charm and good humour prevail, though the bleakness of the photography and setting seem out of keeping with the overall mood. Directed by Peter Bogdanovich

12.10pm Film: Death in a French Garden (1985) starring Christopher Meloni and Nicole Garcia. A young man plunges unexpectedly into danger when he takes a job as a music teacher. Directed by Michel Deville. In French with English subtitles. Ends at 2.00

4.15 Nat King Cole Show (b/w)

4.45 Answering Back. May Goldring talks to Julian Ogilvie Thomson, chairman of the Anglo American Corporation, South Africa's biggest company

5.30 News summary and weather followed by Road to Avonlea. Episode seven

6.30 The Cosby Show. Cosy American sitcom with cuddly Bill Cosby

7.00 Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea (b/w). Classic Sixties underwater series set in a submarine assigned to protect the world from marine menace. Starring Richard Basehart (r)

2.00 Film: Laughter in Paradise (1951, b/w). A few good chores in the very British comedy about four people each left £50,000 by an eccentric relative - if they agree to carry out the various bizarre pranks he has planned for them. With Alastair Sim, Fay Compton, George Cole and Guy Middleton. Directed by Mario Zampi

3.50 Film: Dick Turpin - Highwayman (1955). The story of the highwayman is given glossy treatment in this Hammer production starring Philip Friend. David Patten directs

7.00 Equinox: Patently Obvious?

© CHOICE: A documentary about patents opens with the sad story of the man who invented FM radio, spent a fruitless 15 years trying to protect his discovery in the courts and finally threw himself out of a 13th storey window in New York. But the overall tone of the film is lighter, with a combination of the photography and setting seem out of keeping with the overall mood. Directed by Peter Bogganovich

12.10pm Film: Death in a French Garden (1985) starring Christopher Meloni and Nicole Garcia. A young man plunges unexpectedly into danger when he takes a job as a music teacher. Directed by Michel Deville. In French with English subtitles. Ends at 2.00

1.30pm Love and Passion. A quartet of former lovers meet by chance on a Mediterranean island, where their old passions are reawakened with fond results

4.00 The Cotton Club (1984). Violence and love on the Cotton Club of Manhattan.

4.30pm Michael Redgrave (1973, b/w). A priest who has come to a sticky end saves a man from a stone killer.

5.00 Film: Paper Moon (1973). A priest who has come to a sticky end saves a man from a stone killer.

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8.00 High Stree. Red, Hot and Blue

8.30pm News with Morna Stuart. Weather

9.00 The Madie Show (r)

9.30 Evening News. Fiona Armstrong

10.00 The Chart Show (r)

10.30 Remembrance Day Service 12.00 Sun Weather

1.00 The Cenotaph (1981, b/w). A repeat of the service from 1981.

2.00 The Chart Show (r)

2.30pm Coronation Street 11.25 The Road 12.30 Club Nights 1.00 Spy 2.00

3.00 The Chart Show (r)

3.30pm Coronation Street 11.25 The Road 12.30 Club Nights 1.00 Spy 2.00

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SUMMARY
Probyn is cleared



THE Rugby Football Union announced yesterday that no further disciplinary action was required over Jeff Probyn (above), the England prop who was the subject of an enquiry after a stamping incident during the international against Argentina at Twickenham last weekend. In the same incident Federico Méndez, the Argentine prop, was sent off for punching, though it was claimed afterwards that he had been provoked. In clearing Probyn, the RFU warned of the risk of drawing the wrong conclusions from television Page 31

FOOTBALL

Young hopes

WHERE will the next generation of England players come from? What purpose, if any, does the under-21 team serve? Clive White examines the role of the junior team and assesses its likely importance to the plans of Graham Taylor, the England manager Page 29

SNOOKER

Pocket money



ALLISON Fisher (above), pursues a third women's world championship and a cheque for £10,000 at the Waldorf Hotel, London, this weekend. She plays Karen Corr, who recently beat Fisher in the British championship, for a place in the final tomorrow Page 31

TENNIS

Out of court

BAD luck continues to disrupt the Diet Pepsi challenge tournament at Wembley this week. Yesterday, the No. 2 seed, Goran Ivanovic, of Yugoslavia, pulled out of his quarter-final with influenza. His withdrawal follows that of Pete Sampras, the US Open champion and No. 1 seed, with shin splints Page 28

RUGBY LEAGUE

Waiting game



ELLERY Hanley (above) and his team go into the second international at Old Trafford today seeking to become the first Great Britain side to win a series against Australia for 20 years. The performance which brought a 19-12 victory at Wembley two weeks ago provided grounds for optimism but the Australians can be expected to offer stern resistance Page 30

RACING

Bad break

PETER Scudamore, the reigning National Hunt champion jockey, broke his left leg when Black Humour, trained by Charlie Brooks, fell at Market Rasen yesterday. Earlier, Scudamore had ridden two winners at the meeting. Massingham and Invasion, on whom he depisted for Mark Dwyer, who had been taken to hospital with injuries after a fall Page 32

SPORT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10 1990

Gascoigne gives Taylor a dilemma to resolve

BY DAVID MILLER

WHAT should Graham Taylor do with Paul Gascoigne? It is a question that must be smouldering in his mind as he plans his formation to meet the Republic of Ireland in a European championship qualifying tie in Dublin on Wednesday. Would it make sense, in the circumstances, he must be wondering, to drop him?

That is not quite as daft as it may at first appear, concerning a player not erroneously dubbed by the former England manager, as *daft as a brush*. Gascoigne, darling of the terraces though he may be, is somewhat slow in growing up; and I am not talking about his actions off the field in many directions, which are undoubtedly a drain on his energy.

The harsh fact, recognised by anyone who has watched Gascoigne this season and understands the game, is that he is not relating his play to the rest of the team, whether it is Tottenham Hotspur or England. He may be an outstanding player and the leading goalscorer for his club, but this makes the issue all the more frustrating.

In the opening European tie at home to Poland last month, which England ultimately won comfortably enough, Taylor was of the opinion that England played with 10 men. The missing man was Gascoigne, who was on the pitch, sure enough, but was absent from the heart of the tactical battle. It left Taylor worried.

With Tottenham, Gascoigne's preoccupation with his own intentions, as opposed to the team's at times, have sent Lineker up the metaphoric wall. George Best may have done the same to Bobby Charlton at Old Trafford, but Best was himself the forward *par excellence*.

Gascoigne runs this way, he runs that. And the ball never comes for Lineker. Gascoigne is off on some private excursion, rousing the terraces but too often not allowing his colleagues to join him on the trip.

I saw it happen against Nottingham Forest, where, after 15 minutes of juggling and exhibition sprints, Gascoigne disappeared for 20 minutes. Taylor knows that he cannot afford such a passenger, however talented potentially, against the Republic next Wednesday, in what will be in his description "a typical English cup tie".

Taylor, I suspect, is confronted with an awkward dilemma: that agonising kind of choice facing the international manager who has one match every two or three months rather than one a week, when you can correct in training on Monday what was wrong on Saturday.

Does Taylor, on the one hand, include Gascoigne and risk the possibility that he will be a sleeping partner in the critical balance of the opposition's midfield, where lies the secret of so much of the Republic's success under Jack Charlton; or that he will be provoked into losing his temper, an occurrence regularly close to the surface?

On the other hand, does he leave him out, and risk the wrath, scorn and ridicule of the tabloid press, the hysteria of which tends to diminish rather than enhance the establishment of the successful team for which they — for which we all — continually clamour?

The problem with Gascoigne is that his lack of speed he can be put out of the game, and that will be Ireland's intention: during

a match, which in all probability will be as inelegant as that awful encounter in Cagliari ... where Townsend smothered Gascoigne. Taylor wants to avoid a similar stranglehold this time.

A successful manager has to be pragmatic and, when necessary, hard-headed. Ramsey left out Greaves, though he had the excuse of an injury. Winterbottom, who had something of a fixation about the indispensable quality of Haynes in midfield, would never leave him out; and there were days when Haynes, particularly in a 4-2-4 formation, was shut out of a match or simply failed to pull his weight, as in England's opening defeat by Hungary in the 1962 World Cup finals in Chile.

To the exasperation of many spectators — but not this one —



A word in his ear: Taylor takes Gascoigne aside for advice on where he is going wrong for England

Taylor will hardly relish the prospect of being called a "blindfolded wally" before the match and then, if England should lose without Gascoigne, being condemned as an ignorant idiot afterwards. It is common knowledge that the tabloid press go for headlines first and logic last.

Yet the logic is there. The Republic set out from the start of any match to stop the other team's midfield from operating, to force the opposition to attack from so far away that it cannot hurt their suspect defence. Look at what they did to Hagi in the World Cup defeat of Romania, and nearly did to Italy in the quarter-final.

The problem with Gascoigne is that with his lack of speed he can be put out of the game, and that will be Ireland's intention: during

a match, which in all probability will be as inelegant as that awful encounter in Cagliari ... where Townsend smothered Gascoigne. Taylor wants to avoid a similar stranglehold this time.

Gascoigne is not a poor competitor in the sense that he gives up. His surging run in extra time that forced the despairing foul by Gertzen, of Belgium, and produced the free-kick that won the match, was one of the finest memories of the World Cup. Gascoigne's other problem, besides lack of speed, is that, brush-off, he has no concentration.

I would not want Taylor's dilemma over the next 48 hours, but that is one of the reasons he is paid so well. I suspect he will play safe with the public, rather than with the tactics. I hope Gascoigne does not let him down.

Spectacular success on the slopes

SIMON BARNES
ON SATURDAY

The new-fangled horsehair brooms just aren't the same as the old corn brooms. (Why was the change made? I'm no fool.) Rod Hunter, the media relations director for the northern Alberta association, summed it up for us all: "The corn broom itself lends not only the spectacle of both the noise and visual effect of two good sweepers sweeping. It also — as some people don't like — deposits a certain amount of debris on the ice, which makes the ice swingier. With swingy ice, you get more exciting games."

Naturally, both women are competing on a shot-string, while competitors from the United States and elsewhere are lavishly sponsored — you know the story. Deeply committed to British skiing, though this column is, I can't help but feel that to become one of the best in the world at the *pas de deux* on planks is a truly remarkable achievement.

More on winning women: Julie Krone, American jockey and long-time hero of this space, has won the 2,000th race of her career.

Those dang brooms

Back to winter sports: curling is losing its popularity in Canada, and the reason suggested for this is the brooms.

Racing is not the world's most democratic sport, but this is democracy of a sort. The stewards were dissatisfied with the running of one of the Queen's horses and levied £600 worth of fine. The beast in question, Chestnut Tree, said: "Now, mentally, I feel strong

for tennis and I want to put my mind back into it. I want to play in my mind and my mind was always my strength."

Wide of the mark

On Wilson retires as head coach of the MCC in a fortnight. Looking back over the various ground-staff boys who have worked with him, he recalled one lad who was with him for six months in 1977. "I thought he couldn't bowl," Wilson said. There are few more respected coaches than Wilson. The lad, of course, was I. T. Botham.

"What a mistake," Wilson mused.

Camels come of age

Has camel racing come of age? Last weekend saw what is believed to be the first full camel racing championships held in Africa, or perhaps in the world. This was the Maralal International Camel Derby, which was held in the semi-arid northeastern province of Kenya. It brought in riders from Britain, the United States, Germany and Australia, though quite what most of these countries have to do with camels eludes me. More than 70 riders took part. The long-term aim is to increase the racing distance, so that races take place over 1,000km — a more accurate reflection of a camel's genuine abilities than a quick gimmicky sprint. I have a notion: let us ban the intrusive and lethal Paris-Dakar rally, and replace it with a camel marathon. This is the column that supports camels.

Sorry England count cost of Gooch decision

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, ADELAIDE

AN UNACCOUNTABLE decision was compounded by an unacceptable performance here yesterday and, consequently, England relapsed still further from the health they would wish to be in the Ashes series looms.

In these early weeks of the tour, when the opportunities to discover form and rhythm are barely adequate, winning the toss at the Adelaide Oval seemed happily providential. Choosing to bowl first seemed, in the circumstances, either curiously cautious or crazily charitable.

Eight years ago, on this same ground, Bob Willis allowed his own batsmen to persuade him that he should insert Australia. It was a catastrophic decision which cost England the match and, ultimately, the series, and Willis will never forgive himself. Graham Gooch's insertion yesterday does not have quite the same scope for disaster, but it has handed over the initiative in a match England needed to control.

South Australia did not spurn the invitation and, nor, on the usual, easy-paced pitch here, were they likely to. By the close of the first day, they were 316 for three and heading for the sort of total which will ensure that the only way England can get two innings in this game is by following on. As the priority has to be to improve the shaky form of the top-order batting, this is not the ideal scenario.

The thinking of Gooch and his inner circle was apparently that the Adelaide pitch does not deteriorate and only offers the faster bowlers any help on the first morning. A thin motive for a rash act.

Gooch knew, before the day was very old, that he would not be vindicated by his bowlers. Of the three chosen seamers, only Malcolm offered any menace to the batsmen. Lewis could not control his line nor Bicknell his length.

Up to lunch, England looked a moderate outfit. In the afternoon session, they did not look that good. Indeed, it was only when the second new ball was taken, half-an-hour before stumps, that a record-breaking second-wicket partnership was curtailed at a cost of 275 and Bicknell and Lewis began to show the quality which brought them here.

Gooch was even obliged to take what he regards as the last resort and bowl himself after tea. It is inconceivable that, by then, he was either sanguine about his decision on the toss or satisfied with his team's output, both with the ball and in the field.

England's captain has been offered many opportunities this week to excuse his team's shortcomings with the truism that tour invariably have early hiccups. To his credit, he has refused. "It's easy to say that but it gets us nowhere," he insists. "We only have a certain amount of time to get things right and we have to make the best use of it."

On a two-sweater day — grey, blustery and about as inviting as Northampton in April — standing in the field for six hours while Bishop and Nobes broke a 68-year-old record for the biggest South Australian stand against England, was not time usefully employed.

They came together in the eleventh over, after Malcolm had surprised Hilditch the state's new captain, with a ball which lifted above stump height. Soon, the tall, correct Bishop and his squat, unorthodox partner were being nourished by a wayward spell from Bicknell, who strained visibility for extra speed and suffered the penalty.

Bishop should have been run out when 37, but the pick-up and throw from Larkins at square-leg were scruffy. After lunch Atherton, put down two catches at first slip, though one was from a no-ball, and England plainly still have as many problems in this department as elsewhere.

Hemmings, charged with doing no more than contain, applied a partially effective brake, but 102 runs still came in the session and, as evening approached, the taking of a second wicket seemed a remote ambition.

The eleventh century of Bishop's career was also his fifth against touring teams. Nobes, aged 26, comfortably the youngest batsman in the state's side, was completing only his second century in a first-class career of three seasons. He had been batting almost five hours when his confidence got the better of him and an extravagant drive to Bicknell's second delivery with the new ball was edged to Russell.

The advent of Hooches, who made 195 against Queensland a week ago, did not hold the promise of better times for England, but Lewis, moving the ball sharply, removed him with the final ball of the day. Gower's catch at second slip was no mean effort for one whose hands must by now have been freezing and whose mind may understandably have been focused on the frustrations of a day which might have been made for his own batting purpose.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: First innings		
A M Hilditch c Nobes b Malcolm	145	
G A Bishop not out	131	
P Nobes c Russell b Bicknell	6	
D W Hooches c Gower b Lewis	19	
Extras (1d 14, nb 5)	316	
Total (3 wickets)	316	
11 B Phillips, P R Steep J Soden T Nielsen, T B A May C Milne D Hockey		
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-23 2-286 3-316		
BOWLING: Malcolm 20-2 78 1 Lewis 22-5 1-73 1 (nb 5); Bicknell 18-2 70 1 Hogg 21-8-48-0; Gooch 9-3-20-0 Atherton 4-0 13-0		
ENGLAND: 11 G A Gooch M A Atherton W Larkins, T B A May C Milne P Bicknell, E Hemmings, D E Malcolm		

Yousaf inspires Pakistan, page 32

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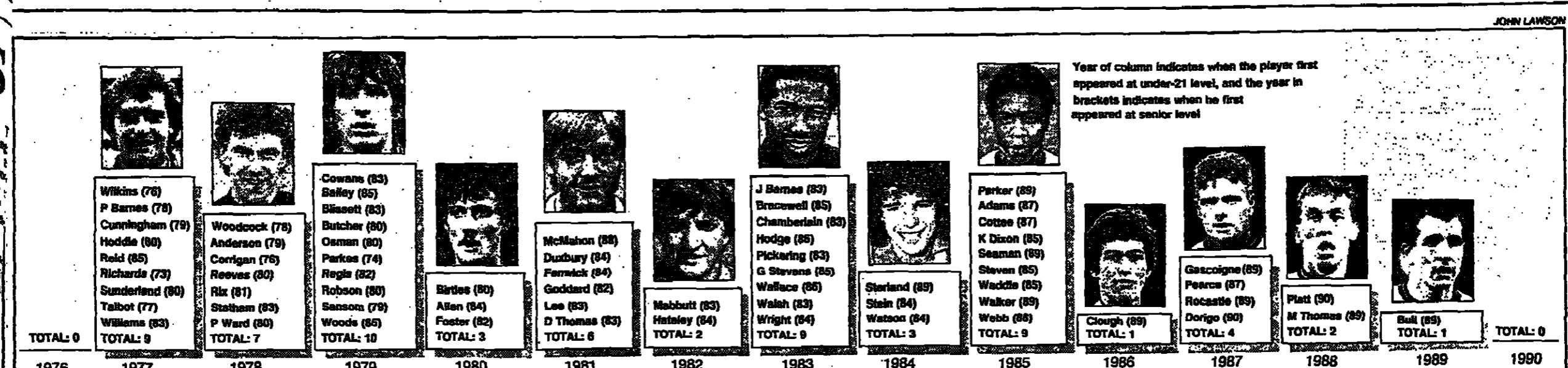
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Falling standards in football's nursery

IF THE capitulation of English footballers north and south of the border, in Europe this week served any purpose it was to remove the misconception that has abounded since the World Cup finals that everything is hunky-dory with the game here.

The Soviet officials who saw to it in Milan that English luck in Italy this year finally ran out may have done us almost as much of a favour as their fellow countrymen who decided that the ball had crossed the line in 1966. Perhaps the burden of expectation will now not weigh quite so heavily on the shoulders of Graham Taylor, the new England manager, as he ponders where the next generation of footballers is coming from.

While the class of Italia '90 may be capable of giving a reasonable account of themselves throughout the European championship qualifiers, which resume next week with an "A-level" examination in Dublin against the Republic of Ireland, too many of them will have graduated to the Old Boys XI by the time the United States World Cup comes round in

How many England under-21 footballers progress to the full international team?

Clive White reports on the passes and failures at England's preparatory school

1994. Sixteen of the squad of 22 announced this week for Dublin will be over 30 by then, many by some years.

The hype surrounding the emergence of Paul Gascoigne and to a much less suffocating degree, David Platt, both young players of prodigious talent, has painted a misleading picture of the overall standard of England's young players. Not since the advent of the Uefa under-21 championship in 1976-78 have English teams at this level looked more bereft of potential.

The 3-1 win which Taylor and

company kicked off with against Hungary was, possibly, a trifle flattering and owed much to the belated appearance of Robins, who scored two goals. The home defeat to Poland last month, England's first match in the new under-21 campaign, was ominous.

Lawnie McMenemy, who has been given responsibility for the under-21 side, which is a little ironic since he made his reputation as a manager squeezing the last drop of goodness out of established players rather than taking too many chances on youth, blamed two factors, principally, for the failure; firstly, he blamed the poor crowd attendance at White Hart Lane which at 2,000 was the lowest for more than five years for a match of this kind, and secondly, the determination of the Poles to sell themselves to West European buyers.

If the squad of 18 for next Tuesday's match against the Republic in Cork is not short of potential, it is certainly short of recognisable names. It contains only three first division regulars — David Lee (Chelsea), John Ebbrell

(Everton) and Nigel Jemson (Nottingham Forest) — and five from outside of the first division. Joe Royle, who returns to coach the side after missing the Poland defeat, described it as a squad "with a cross-section of experience". With all due respect his remark that "I wouldn't mind three of four of them at Oldham" did not say very much.

Taylor, a latter-day Prince Charming, has committed himself to scouring all corners of the country for players capable of slipping into the shoes of the present England team. Circulars have been sent out to every club in the land asking them if they could recommend a player and replies have been received from about 70. "We don't necessarily think you've got to be in the first team of a first division club. We think a lad in any of the four divisions should think that he's got an opportunity," McMenemy said.

Five former managers and coaches, whose names have yet to be announced, are helping with the evaluation of players but it is a mammoth task. Then there is the problem of trying to test the best in a competitive international environment.

"You want to look at as many as you can but also remain professional about it and win your games in the under-21 championship. It's difficult to keep changing the team and yet have results. When next week's match is over we'll spend the winter trying to formulate a plan," McMenemy said.

By barring over-age players, Uefa have turned their championship into much more of a competition and less of a vehicle for grooming young players. That may not be a good thing and certainly goes against the fashionable theory that the competitive element should be removed as much as possible from the lives of maturing young footballers.

Players like Marco Gabbiadini and Earl Barrett, who miss out because of the strict limitation on age, can only hope to gain further international experience in B games which Taylor and McMenemy are attempting to

supplement with League representative matches like the one between the Barclays League and the Irish League at Windsor Park on Tuesday. "We're just trying to get a thread running through," McMenemy said.

England's record, mainly under Dave Sexton, in the seven under-21 championships to date, is second to none — winners twice and semi-finalists on four other occasions. But there have been signs of a decline since England last won in 1982-84 and for the first time in the last championship they failed to qualify for the finals.

More importantly, the number of players filtering through into the senior side has slowed dramatically as the table above indicates. Of the 256 players capped at under-21 level between 1976 and the end of last season, 66 have reached senior level, a success rate of 25 per cent though that figure may improve slightly over the next couple of years due to late developers. Even so, only eight in the last four years have gone on to bigger things and of those only Gascoigne, Platt and Stuart Pearce

could be described as fixtures in the senior side.

A few occasionally escape the under-21 net. Of those in the present squad of 22, Gary Lineker, Peter Beardsley, Gary Stevens, Lee Dixon and Ian Wright never appeared at the lower level.

There are also exceptions to the rule that it takes one to three years for those under-21 players who eventually graduate to reach senior recognition. Peter Reid's talent was missed for eight years between being honoured at the two levels while, Phil Parkes was capped as an over-age player at under-21 level five years after winning his one and only full cap.

Under-21 history is littered with players who were never heard of again in representative football, players like Cliff Carr (Fulham), Paul Haigh (Hull City) and Gary Lund (Grimsby Town). No doubt several of those in the current squad will fall by the wayside but unless Taylor's exhaustive search produces a higher ratio of successes than in recent years, England could end up as one of Europe's ugly sisters.

Uncompromising Reid puts reputation on line

By IAN ROSS

THERE is no doubt that Peter Reid's sense of personal disappointment at Howard Kendall's decision to leave Manchester City for Everton earlier this week, but it did not stop him from applying the uncompromising tactic of a different nature.

Within a matter of minutes of Kendall's controversial resignation, Peter Swales, the chairman, had promoted Reid from player-coach to caretaker manager.

The inference was that if City continued to prosper under the guidance of the former England international as they have done under Kendall, a permanent appointment was a distinct possibility.

Rather typically, Reid was having none of it. After publicly declaring a desire to become City's twelfth manager in 17 years, he issued his board of directors with a not-so-subtly veiled ultimatum, stating that he would take charge of team selection for tomorrow's televised game against Leeds United at Maine Road, but demanding a swift decision on his future with the club.

"I said that I did not want to be left dangling on a string and I stand by that statement. I am a force to be reckoned with in football," said Reid.

"We had a long chat during the European championships in West Germany a couple of years ago. I was impressed not just by his fiery determination, but by his grasp of the practicalities of football. I realised then that he possessed the knowledge to

make a difference."

Whatever Peter Swales and his directors decide, I am convinced that Reid will go on to be a force to be reckoned with in football," said Reid.

Jimmy Case, of Southampton, replaces Reid as the Football League's selection on Tuesday. Steve Bruce of Manchester United, has been asked to stand in case Gary Pallister is needed by England for the European championship game against the Republic of Ireland in Dublin the next day.

"People are constantly saying that once you have reached the age of 30 your legs have gone and you are finished," said Reid. "Players like Gordon continue to prove that there is, and never will be, any substitute for real class."

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Richard E. affai

New Halen on handy mark to gain second Cheltenham triumph

By MANDARIN
(MICHAEL PHILLIPS)

NEW Halen, who created one of the biggest shocks of last season when winning the Mildmay Of Fleet Challenge Cup during the National Hunt festival at Cheltenham at odds of 66-1, returns to the scene of his greatest triumph today in an attempt to try and win the Mackeson Gold Cup over the same course and distance.

Tough assignment that this is, I still think he stands an excellent chance and he is my nap.

The extraordinary aspect of that fine victory last March was the fact that even after the weights had risen overnight he was still set to carry 18lb more than his allotted mark in the long handicap.

But with Eamon Tierney looking excellent value for his 7lb allowance, there did not appear to be a semblance of a fluke about the way New Halen dominated the race and eventually strode away up the hill from those in-form horses Lacidor and King Of The Lot.

As a leather broke during his only subsequent race last season, we had to wait until he reappeared after a summer's rest at Stratford three weeks ago to see whether or not that Cheltenham win was simply a flash in the pan.

New Halen did not disappoint. Although he started the outsider of three, he beat Assaglawi, who had won twice already at Worcester, fair and square.

So with Tierney again claiming his allowance and reducing the burden to only 9lb, I believe New Halen



Dunwoody: rides that fine prospect Bigsun

will give his backers another good run for their money.

What appeals to me in particular is his ability to make all the running, thereby staying out of any trouble that may occur.

Followers of Martin Pipe's stable can choose between Wingspan and Fu's Lady, who are also unbroken this season.

While Wingspan appears to have plenty on his plate with top weight, Fu's Lady will be meeting Clever Folly on 5lb worse terms for their Ascot running where there was only three-quarters of a length between them.

Clever Folly also has a fine victory over today's course and distance last December to his credit. On the other hand, Joint Sovereignty, who won today's race 12 months ago, has not looked in good form since.

Captain Mor is another who has not been beaten this

season, his last success being gained with the minimum of fuss at Wetherby only last Saturday. He has been penalised by 6lb as a result.

Thar-An-Bhar, however, has not been penalised for winning ten days ago at Newbury.

Richard Dunwoody, who rode Thar-An-Bhar that day, has the ride again. But this talented jockey has better prospects of winning the Flowers Original Handicap Chase on Bigsun, whose first run of the season at Newbury held out such high hopes.

At Doncaster, the William Hill November Handicap is the last big race of the Flat turf season, which closes at Folkestone on Monday.

In the early Sixties, the late Towner Gosden, from his base in Lewes, became the scourge of the bookmakers when he won the corresponding race when it was still run at the now defunct Manchester racecourse three years out of four with Damzibrah, Best Song and Concealed.

With a record like that in the family, it is hardly surprising that his son John, who now operates a highly successful operation in Newmarket having done likewise in California, is doubly anxious to make his own mark hopefully with My Lord, a fresh horse who satisfied George Robinson, our Newmarket correspondent, with a fine piece of work on the Limerick.

Blinded first time
DONCASTER: 1.50 November, 2.25 Nit. Match, 3.5 Wings Of Freedom, Inferno, 3.25 Paloma, Gold Performer.

Piggott rides Fabre hope

LESTER Piggott has been enlisted by Sheikh Mohammed as he attempts to hold off his elder brother Hamdan Al-Maktoum at the top of the Flat owners' table.

At Folkestone on Monday, the final day of the turf season, Piggott has been booked to ride the Andin Fabre-trained Tsar Maiden for the Sheikh in the Augusta Hotel Maiden Stakes. Piggott will also be in action at Sandown on 5lb.

Going: good to firm

12.45 MAN OF THE WEST (F) 6-15 Antigone Smile, 2.5 Almond, 3.5 Whimsical, 3.15 Sictor, 3.45 Shoots Wind.

Michael Seely: 12.45 Man Of The West

Timeless Times attempt

Bill O'Gorman has decided to let Timeless Times take his chance in the seven-furlong El Alamein Nursery at Doncaster today in an attempt to better the juvenile record of 16 wins in a season.

The Newmarket trainer will be doubly represented in this event as he also saddles Scottish Castle, who is chasing a four-timer, with O'Gorman's daughter Emma aboard. Timeless Times, who jointly holds the record with Provizio and The Bard, will be ridden for the first

time by John Williams.

The colt equalled the record at Pontefract on September 4, but then had injury problems and underwent a knee operation. He made his reappearance in the United States last month, but trailed in last in the Laurel Futurity.

O'Gorman reported: "There is no point pretending Timeless Times is at his best and if we weren't in this record-breaking situation we wouldn't even be thinking about it. But I think he can be a winner off 102."

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Going: good to firm in places

12.45 CHU CHILDREN IN NEED NOVICES CHASE (22.49m: 7) (runners)

1 1/4 POTATO PICKER 10 (F,G,S) B McLean 9-11-6 —

2 4/ CRACKHILL 10 (F,G,S) B McLean 11-11-2 —

3 4/5 MAN OF THE WEST 12 (F,G,S) Mrs Hagedorn 9-11-0 —

5 6/4 TEASIDE 14 (F,G,S) B McLean 11-11-0 —

7 6/5 FAIRWEATHER 14 (F,G,S) Mrs Hagedorn 11-11-0 —

8 6/5-3 TISCOR 7 (F,G,S) B McLean 9-11-0 —

11-14 Man Of The West, 4-1 Teaside, 9-2 Thimble, 6-1

Potato Picker, 6-1 Crackhill, 10-1 Tropico, 12-1 others.

1.15 PUDSEY BEAR NOVICES CHASE (21.57m: 2m) (6)

1 1/2-1 ANTRIM SNAKE 17 (F,G,S) B McLean 5-11-7 —

2 5-8 DEEP LEGEND 8 (F,G,S) A Nitton 5-11-0 —

3 7-18 FAIRWAYS ON TARGET 37 (F,G,S) Mrs G McLean 5-11-0 —

4 6/5-1 PIGGY 11 (F,G,S) Mrs G McLean 5-11-0 —

5 6/5-3 TROPICO 11 (F,G,S) Mrs Hagedorn 5-11-0 —

6 6/5-3 PALAMON 177 (F,G,S) B McLean 5-11-0 —

7 6/5-1 ANTRIM SNAKE 11 — Fairways On Target, 6-1 Deep

Legend, 6-1 The Doe, 14-1 Palamino, 16-1 Ginger Deep

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Executive Editor David Brewerton

BUSINESS

Unilever hit by profit cutback in US

By GRAHAM SEARJANT
FINANCIAL EDITOR

UNILEVER, the Anglo-Dutch food, detergent and toiletries group, disappointed the stock markets with an 8 per cent rise in third-quarter pre-tax profits, increased to £488 million.

This was despite an earlier warning from Sir Michael Angus, the chairman, that the second half of the year might be difficult. The shares initially dropped 25p to 595p.

But they recovered to 613p, down 9p, after it emerged that the results unexpectedly included some £30 million of exceptional costs to restructure Lipton, the group's American tea operation.

Together with tough competition in North America and heavy promotional spending in the detergent market there, that pushed American operating profits for the three months to end September down from £116 million to £74 million, on 7 per cent higher turnover. Sir Michael said the American results were disappointing. In most of the group's other markets round the world profits and margins improved. European profits were particularly buoyant, partly due to ice cream sales on the continent, rising 27 per cent to £375 million.

Within Europe, the German market was singled out as a success.

Sir Michael said the results were also helped by the sale of the group's oilseed milling operations in Britain and Germany.

Outside North America and Europe, the group made broadly based progress but in Japan the market still remained difficult and competitive.

The third-quarter dividend is up 7.8 per cent to 4.86p per share, from earnings up 12 per cent to 15.6p.

For the nine months, pre-tax profits rose 6 per cent to £1.33 billion from turnover up 12 per cent to £16.6 billion. Earnings per share were 16 per cent higher at 44.53p.

Brokers' profit forecasts for the full year were cut at the interim stage, after Sir Michael said he was cautious about the second half. County NatWest has again reduced its 1990 pre-tax forecast from £1.85 billion to £1.8 billion.

THE ROUND

US dollar 1.9670 (+0.0005)
German mark 2.9271 (+0.0033)
Exchange index 94.4 (same)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1582.6 (+7.7)
FT-SE 100 2040.6 (+4.4)
New York Dow Jones 2470.30 (+26.49)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge 22931.80 (-38.01)
Closing Prices ... Page 39
Major indices and major changes Page 36

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 14%
3-month libor 13.75% 13.4%
3-month eurobills 13% 13.1%
US: Prime Rate 10%
Federal Funds 7.1%
3-month Treasury Bills 7.05-7.04%
30-year bonds 100.12-100.22%

CURRENCIES

London: New York:
\$ 51.9672*
DM 9271*
SwF 2.4588*
FF 19.8212*
Yen 125.02*
Euro 1.4254*
ECU 13.701345 SDR 0.734861 E. SDR 1.365801

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM 3.00-3.05 pm 3.025 70
Coss 3.04 7.5-8.525 (E15.95-
19.25)
New York: Coss 3.03 50-384 00*

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Dec) ... \$34.35bbl (\$34.70)
* Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

Australia \$ 2.60 2.65
Austria Sch 21.50 20.20
Belgium Fr 63.00 62.50
Canada \$ 1.35 1.35
Denmark Kr 11.70 11.50
Finland Mark 1.37 1.35
France Fr 16.50 16.50
Germany DM 3.055 2.985
Greece Dr 310.00 290.00
Hong Kong \$ 15.60 15.50
Ireland P 23.00 21.50
Japan Yen 260.00 250.00
Netherlands Gld 3.435 3.225
New Zealand \$ 1.35 1.35
Portugal Esc 260.25 250.25
South Africa Rand 5.00 4.50
Spain Pta 197.00 175.00
Sweden Kr 10.50 10.50
Switzerland Fr 2.555 2.405
Turkey Lira 57.00 52.00
USA \$ 2.045 1.985
Yugoslavia Dr 27.00 26.00

Fates for any determination basis only to support the Bank of England. Different rates apply to travellers cheques.
Retail Price Index: 129.3 (September)

Uncertainty over Polly Peck hurts northern Cyprus

From ANGELA MACKAY
IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

THE council of ministers of northern Cyprus held an emergency meeting yesterday to discuss a growing regional cash problem exacerbated by the uncertainty surrounding the future ownership of Polly Peck International's assets there.

Richard Stone, one of PPI's administrators, two colleagues spent the day with Ilker Nevzat, chief executive of PPI in Cyprus. Interests include the Sunzett fruit packing and processing plant, four hotels trading under the Voyager flag, Pearl Construction, A N Graphics and Cyprus Industrial Bank. Asil Nadir, Polly Peck's

Turkish Cypriot chairman, had been expected to accompany Mr Stone, but stayed in London to prepare a defence in a bankruptcy action.

The council meeting, chaired by Mr Raul Denktash, the region's president, was called after much of northern Cyprus had no electricity for seven hours on Thursday because the electricity board could not afford diesel oil for the power plant. The plants provide a back-up to the power sold to the north by the Greek Cypriots in authority in the south.

Mr Stone planned to submit a preliminary report within the week valuing PPI assets but the government in northern

Cyprus has frustrated attempts to examine bank accounts and other documentation. He will try to meet ministers this weekend and petition for a lifting of the injunction that is prohibiting local subsidiaries from revealing information to him.

Mr Denktash has provided moral support for Mr Nadir, but his government cannot provide financial support.

Mr Nadir is planning to fly to northern Cyprus next week to help Mr Stone's investigation, despite moves by Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Shearson Lehman Brothers to declare him bankrupt. A petition by Lehman and BZW will be heard in the bankruptcy registry on

Tuesday. They are suing Mr Nadir for £22.1 million.

The trade department is keeping alive its option of mounting an investigation into Polly Peck after meeting the company's administrators yesterday. Michael Jordan, PPI's administrator from Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, met DTI officials to report on the progress of his investigation.

A Coopers spokesman described the meetings as "easy-going", while the DTI said it was a routine meeting and it would keep in touch with the administrators while they prepare their report on the company.

Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, said when PPI was placed in administration

that he would request a full report from Coopers at the earliest opportunity. But Coopers' enquiries are still at an early stage and the DTI wants clearer details before deciding to investigate.

The Serious Fraud Office is anxious to meet Jason Davies, the former broker at the centre of the Polly Peck affair, at his home in Geneva, according to his lawyer in London, Rodney Hylton-Poole.

The British police need the formal agreement of the Swiss authorities before they can visit Mr Davies, who runs Nadir Investments, the Swiss company that administers the personal finances of the Nadir family.

DES JENSON

Pöhl calls for two-speed move to Emu

By ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

KARL Otto Pöhl, the president of the German Bundesbank, called yesterday for an inner core of European countries to move quickly towards a fuller monetary union. He also offered a sharp, and sometimes sarcastic, critique of Britain's proposal for a new European currency, the "hard ecu", and repeated the Bundesbank's demand that other countries that wanted a monetary union would have to make their central banks politically independent first.

The same message on central bank independence, which Bundesbank officials said was aimed at France as well as Britain, was repeated in even stronger terms in Washington by Dr Hans Tietmeyer, a key member of the Bundesbank council.

Herr Pöhl had a conference at the London School of Economics on the European central bank proposed by last month's Rome summit

should not be established until "it has been clearly decided which countries are prepared and able to irrevocably fix their exchange rates and to transfer monetary policy responsibility to the community".

Such a move to fully fixed exchange rates between Germany, France, the Benelux countries and possibly Denmark and Ireland was "the most likely and the most realistic scenario" for progress towards the ultimate goal of economic and monetary union (Emu) among all the countries of Europe, Herr Pöhl added later in a discussion at the LSE on his prepared statement.

He argued that other countries, including Britain, Italy and Spain, should not stand in the way of this approach to Emu, since they would be able to "join in later as their domestic economic conditions improved". "Why should we not have a group of countries which have reached a high degree of convergence start the exercise?" The door

was left open for other countries to join later."

Herr Pöhl also delivered an acerbic critique of Britain's proposals for a market-based approach to Emu through the creation of a "hard ecu". This would be a non-inflationary currency that a European central bank would circulate alongside existing national currencies.

He insisted this "parallel currency strategy offers no advantages" in terms of institutional arrangements, since it does not guarantee the independence of the European central bank. But it has the crucial disadvantage of leaving responsibility for monetary policy unclear between the national and European central banks. Responsibility for monetary policy had to be "indivisible" and vested in one politically independent central bank. Because the hard ecu approach would divide this responsibility, it could be "the worst possible recipe for monetary policy".

Kenneth Fleet, page 37



Financial exchanges: Karl Otto Pöhl and John Major, the Chancellor, meeting at 11 Downing Street yesterday.

Company failures at their second highest

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

Lilley: no easy cure

are up 57 per cent to 2,316.

Mr Lilley, speaking at the chambers' annual lunch in London, said inflation had to be reduced, and that curing it would not be painless or easy.

He said: "The underlying strength of the economy after a decade of rising productivity and profitability means that there is no reason to expect a repeat of the recession of the early Eighties."

The statistics, from the trade department, show company insolvencies to be the second-highest ever. The total for individual insolvencies is a record.

The figures, published through the British Chambers of Commerce, show that the provisional, seasonally adjusted total of company insolvencies for the third quarter of this year was 4,018, an increase of 22.7 per cent from the 3,273 recorded for the previous three months.

The year-on-year rise from last year's third quarter stands at 62 per cent.

The particularly sharp rise

in the latest quarter, is in line with recent surveys from the chamber and the CBI. They show business confidence at its lowest level for a decade.

Compulsory liquidations have risen 80 per cent over the year to an unadjusted figure of 985 for July to September, while voluntary liquidations

were up 57 per cent to 2,316.

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strength of the economy after a decade of rising productivity and profitability means that there is no reason to expect a repeat of the recession of the early Eighties."

Further gloom is expected

next week when the CBI publishes the regional breakdown of its survey on industrial trends.

• European pessimism over

the outlook for business is concentrated primarily in the UK, according to a Dun & Bradstreet survey. Dr Joseph Duncan, Dun & Bradstreet's chief economist, said: "The low level of optimism in the UK clearly indicates that a recession is in place."

Miles Middleton, BBC

president, said: "The steep rise in insolvencies confirms that businesses are going through a very difficult period and will need as much support as can be provided."

Last night, Michael Spicer.

the housing minister, speaking to construction employers in Broadway, Gloucestershire, said there were some encouraging signs ahead for the building industry.

Mr Spicer added that recent gloomy surveys about construction prospects had been taken before the recent cut in interest rates.

However, according to the latest survey from the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors, few engineering contractors expected any increase in work or employment over the next 12 months.

Fifty-two per cent of companies are reporting worse order books than 12 months ago. Forty-eight per cent are expecting to employ fewer workers than a year ago. Profits are also being squeezed and 79 per cent of companies report lower margins than a year ago.

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Hillsdown puts offer to Lilley

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

HILLSDOWN Holdings has put a last minute compromise offer to Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, to try to save its rescue deal for Strong & Fisher, the ailing leather group, without a monopolies commission enquiry.

Mr Lilley said earlier that he would refer the deal, which would give Hillsdown a majority stake in S&F, unless Hillsdown agreed to sell S&F's 27 per cent stake in Pittard Garmer, the other main quoted leather group.

Pittard's shares are at a low ebb because of the parlous state of the market for skins and this exacerbated S&F's problems.

Hillsdown, which is keen to rationalise the industry, does not want to sell the stake at this low point and has hinted that it might walk away from the S&F deal if it were referred, precipitating a likely collapse of S&F.

Talks were being held between Hillsdown and trade department officials to see if the new proposal satisfies the department's objections to the combination on competitive grounds.

• Canada Packers, Hillsdown's 56 per cent owned Canadian offshoot, is to reorganise its processed food division, cutting 160 jobs, many at divisional head office.

Andrew Harrington at

Barclays de Zoete Wedd has

trimmed his full year pre-tax

profits forecast to £16 million.

Oxford's trading profit sharply up

By PHILIP PANGALOS

Stricken Qantas to cut jobs and flights

From REUTER IN SYDNEY

QANTAS Airways says its financial position is critical, partly because of the rise in fuel prices caused by the Gulf tensions.

Australia's state-owned international carrier said it would cut 500 jobs by March, sell five Boeing 747s earlier than planned and cut flying hours by 14 per cent in the year to June 30. John Ward, the chief executive, said: "Our financial position has reached a critical point where immediate action is necessary to contain costs and improve our competitiveness."

Qantas has about 17,000 staff. The Labor government said on Thursday that it planned to sell 49 per cent of the airline and would allow foreign investors to take up to 35 per cent.

Qantas is due shortly to announce 1989-90 results that analysts believe will reveal a small profit after the sale of several aircraft.

Qantas said in a statement

that the early sale of five aircraft would bring to nine the number to be sold over the next 18 months. It had planned 200,000 flying hours in 1990-91 but this would now be cut to 173,000.

Mr Ward said events in the Gulf would push up Qantas's fuel bill in 1990-91 by an estimated Aus\$318 million (£126 million). "We're in a critical period. Our industry is characterised by huge costs and very fine margins. Small downturns in traffic and small increases in costs play havoc with profitability."

Australian airlines were badly affected by an eight-month domestic pilots' dispute which ended early this year, cutting inbound tourism which is only now recovering. Qantas said in September that it needed Aus\$10 billion in funds by the year 2000 to finance a fleet expansion programme and lower its debt-to-equity ratio.

Air New Zealand showed

cautious interest in Australia's decision to sell up to 40 per cent of Australian Airlines, its domestic carrier, and 35 per cent of Qantas to foreign investors. Bob Hawke, the Australian prime minister, said that the move would offer clear opportunities for the New Zealand national carrier to enter the Australian market.

Richard Gates, Air New Zealand's director of public relations, said: "It's an interesting change in policy and obviously we'll have to consider that in light of our own commercial objectives." Air New Zealand is 35 per cent owned by Brierley Investments, which collapsed in May after a last-ditch merger in January with Courtwell.

The Barracuda has a turnover of some £70 million and returns an annual pre-tax profit of about £1.5 million.

After the judgment, both Andros Stakis, the company's chief executive, and Peter Hughes, of Cork Gully, the receiver, who negotiated the sale on behalf of Arthur Andersen, confirmed that they now expect to conclude the deal.

Stakis had contracted to buy the casino in June after last-minute legal difficulties had caused the expiry of an earlier agreement between the receivers and London Clubs, the former gaming division of Grand Metropolitan.

Before Stakis could complete, however, London Clubs injunctioned the sale and sought an order from the High Court to reinstate its own deal.

The action was for estoppel and relief from forfeiture.

Costs in the case, which are expected to be well in excess of £1 million, will be resolved at an adjourned hearing.

Downgrading for Japanese banks

Moody's Investors Service, the American rating agency, has downgraded the debt ratings of four leading Japanese banks, including Sumitomo Bank, which has been linked to recent scandals involving loans to stock and property speculators (Joe Joseph writes).

Sumitomo and Mitsubishi Banks went from AAA to AA-1. Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan from AA-2 to A-1, and Tokai Bank from AA-2 to AA-3. About \$3.7 billion in securities are affected at Sumitomo, \$2.9 billion at Mitsubishi, \$5.8 billion at Long-Term Credit Bank, and \$500 million at Tokai.

Stakis wins High Court battle for casino deal

By OUR CITY STAFF

STAKIS, the leisure group, finally succeeded in its protracted High Court battle to establish the right to purchase the Barracuda casino in London's Baker Street for £11.5 million from Arthur Andersen, the receiver.

The casino, one of the largest in London and worth an estimated £14 million on the open market, is part of the wreckage of Leisure Investments, which collapsed in May after a last-ditch merger in January with Courtwell.

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Banham does the government a favour with his pay message



KENNETH
FLEET

cent now to 5.5 per cent by the fourth quarter of next year. Falling inflation is one of the "fundamentals" for keeping the sterling exchange rate within its permitted band against the mark and allowing the Chancellor to make further cuts in bank base rates. He is keen to make them to restrict the depth of the recession and to revive the government's political fortunes, and the City sense that cuts will be made - 1 per cent before mortgage rates are recalculated in January and another similarly helpful cut, taking base rates down to 12 per cent by the Budget in March.

But he is not the man to take dangerous risks with the exchange rate, which is now the controlling factor. Sterling may face three tests in the coming weeks and months:

□ A Gulf war, which would demonstrate whether the pound is still accepted as a petro-currency and thus better protected from panic selling than it is not.

□ A conviction in the markets that Mrs Thatcher will lose the next general election.

□ A bearish assessment of the economic and financial consequences of Neil Kinnock.

Mr Major needs to have confidence

on all three counts before he signals the next base rate cut. If he sends such a signal, it could mark the turning point for the equity market.

Central bank looms larger on horizon

The European Community may not yet have embarked on an irreversible course toward a single European currency but you do not need a strong telescope to see a European central bank, which looks remarkably like the Bundesbank, on the horizon.

The bank, or rather the central banking system, for the scheme embraces national central banks in each Community country, would be built on four major principles. As Karl Otto Pöhl, the Bundesbank president, explained them at an American Express Bank gathering on Thursday, they are: a commitment to stable prices (inflation), independence from governments, responsibility for monetary policy in all member countries, and the lawful refusal to print money to cover budget deficits. Herr Pöhl claimed "a very high degree of agreement" among governments and central bankers, which in itself is remarkable. No politician can claim he has not been warned.

Robin Leigh-Pemberton, the Governor of the Bank of England, favours both independence and the Pöhl-shaped draft model for a Community central bank that will shortly come out of the central bankers committee which Herr Pöhl chairs. The commitment to

sound money — the belief that inflation is a deadly sin — is the most important thing, according to Sir George Blunden, who retired as deputy Governor earlier this year. Given that commitment by government, the best place to run monetary policy is the central bank.

In Sir George's view, the central bank would insulate printing and controlling money from politics. He thought a European central bank in the context of monetary union, provided it were made accountable to the elected rulers, might provide the best insulation. Independence and accountability are the hallmarks of English compromise that even Mrs Thatcher might accept.

When the details of the Community central banking system come to be promulgated, Mrs Thatcher may not be there and, conceivably, nor will be present Governor. Well into his second term, Mr Leigh-Pemberton has developed into a first-class Governor: able to master his brief, perceptive, acute, charming and resilient. From the press he received in 1983 when he appeared from nowhere (or rather the chairmanship of National Westminster Bank) as Mrs Thatcher's choice for governor, you might have thought he had his cricket bat at the wrong end. Now he has become a difficult act to follow.

The favourites to succeed him, and if

he runs his full second term, it may be Neil Kinnock who will decide, are presently Sir David Scholey (Warrburg) from without, and "Eddie" George, the deputy Governor, from within.

David Walker, chairman of the Securities and Investments Board, and Sir David, a non-executive member of the court, has slipped a little and two other names have been chalked on the board: George Younger, who has given up his political career for personal reasons but also to become chairman of the Royal Bank of Scotland, and Lord Alexander of Weeden, a real dark horse, who is undergoing a rapid course in banking as chairman of NatWest.

Mr Younger has the friendship and loyalty of the prime minister and if it made sense to have banker in Threadneedle Street wise in the ways of politics, he would have the right credentials.

At 53, Robert Alexander has time on his side, as well as commanding height (6ft 6in), the impressive skills of a leading advocate and former chairman of the Bar Council (he would make the third barrister governor in a row), and the resolution to carve out a City career, which, I suspect, may well extend beyond the Takeover Panel and NatWest.

Parkland slips into the red

By PHILIP PANGALOS

PARKLAND Textile (Holdings), the Bradford woollen yarn, worsted cloth and clothing manufacturer, has cut its interim dividend after sliding into the red at the half-way stage.

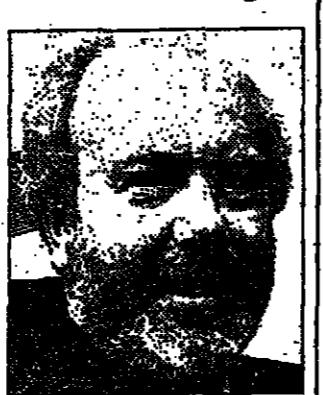
The group, which issued a profits warning last month, fell to a pre-tax loss of £517,000 in the half year to end-August, against profits of £1.48 million last time.

The interim dividend has been cut to 1.5p (2.2p), after a 4.7p loss per share (1.3p earnings). Figures were hampered by an exceptional loss of £520,000 after "a severe fall in the wool price", down 23 per cent between July and September, and reorganisation costs in the company's clothing and fabric businesses.

Michael Rowley, finance director, said margins had been under pressure due to poor retail trading in Britain and the strength of sterling, which had made exporting more difficult.

Turnover, excluding inter-company sales, fell from £29.5 million to £27.6 million.

American switch at Laura Ashley



LAURA Ashley, the fashion and home furnishings retailer, has undergone a second boardroom shake-out since the group was rescued from near-bankruptcy three months ago.

Peter Revers, chairman and chief executive of Laura Ashley's North American division, is to leave.

The departure of Mr Revers, who has been with the group since 1970, follows that of John James, who resigned as chief executive of the group in August. Mr James has not yet been replaced.

Mr Revers' replacement is Terry Smith, who becomes a main board director of the group as well as the chairman and chief executive of the North American division. He has been with the group since 1983 and became chief operating officer of the North American division in 1986.

The Laura Ashley board is further strengthened by the appointment of Hugh Blakeley Webb as non-executive deputy chairman.

He is a senior partner with Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte and has been an adviser to the group and the Ashley family for some time.

Mr Revers is expected to receive some compensation for loss of office.

Since the departure of Mr James the group has announced a restructuring involving a cash injection of more than £30 million by the Japanese group Aeon in return for a 15 per cent stake in the group.

The Japanese group has the right to appoint a non-executive director to the board. The shares fell 1p to 67p.

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RETIREMENT

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*Source: Government Actuaries Department.

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Banks divided on splitting interest in joint accounts

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

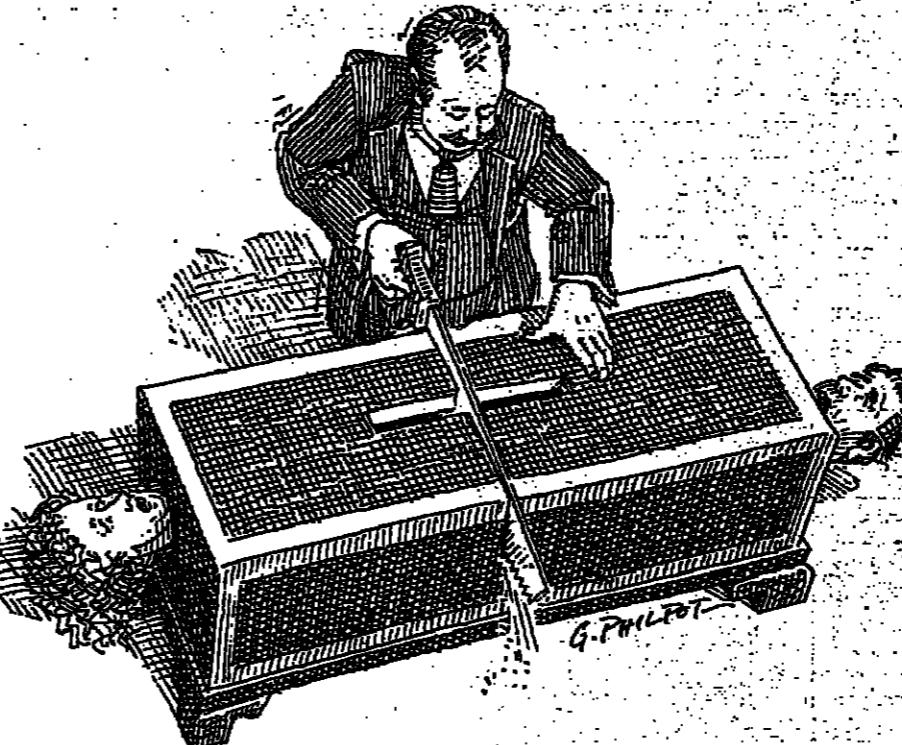
MILLIONS of couples will have to decide over the next five months whether to continue with their joint bank accounts after composite rate tax (CRT) is scrapped next April. The choice will be forced on couples where one is a taxpayer and the other is not. Regulations laid before Parliament by the Inland Revenue yesterday permit banks and building societies to split the interest on joint accounts so that half the money can be paid without tax deducted and the rest paid net of basic rate tax. But the big four banks have decided that they will not offer this facility. Most building societies will, however, split the interest.

The Inland Revenue would like all banks to offer split interest accounts. "The facility will make it easier and simpler for savers," it said.

Non-taxpayers who share joint accounts with taxpayers will be able to claim back the tax deducted by the banks from the Inland Revenue, but not until after April 6, 1992. This could be more than £750 in some cases. The Inland Revenue cannot say how long it will take to process applications for refunds received in 1992. This will depend on how many of the 15 million non-taxpayers fill in application forms, available from banks and building societies next month, and how many receive interest payments gross.

Those non-taxpayers who have accounts in their name alone, or with a bank or building society that will split interest, will have access to the extra money straightforward.

The main reason for the banks not allowing interest to be split, according to the



British Bankers' Association, is that their computers are too old to make the change easily.

The banks are also concerned at the cost of scrapping CRT, which they already put at millions of pounds.

The Midland Bank said: "There is also genuine concern on the legal question of constructive trusts. By agreeing to pay half the interest to one party with tax deducted and the other half without deduction they are put on notice that there is a constructive trust." This could cause difficulties if account holders disputed ownership of the money in the account. By paying the interest in two portions, the banks fear they would have accepted equal ownership.

Lloyds Bank estimates it has 900,000 joint accounts

where one partner is a non-taxpayer.

Barclays said: "We are currently reviewing the situation. We have no plans to introduce split interest at present."

National Westminster Bank said it was a complex issue with legal and practical considerations. The bank has two million joint savings accounts and estimates that 30 per cent will have one party who is not a taxpayer.

The Abbey National and TSB are the largest banks to split interest on joint accounts. Andrew Buley at TSB said it was possible because the bank had very sophisticated on-line real-time computers.

Most building societies are also planning to split the interest. Mike Whitehouse,

NatWest
teaches
facts
of life

STAFF at National Westminster Bank have been given lessons in the modern financial facts of life by the bank's insurance division. It realised that more couples are living together, and therefore need different investment advice from married couples. (Lindsay Cook writes).

Steve Wells, deputy managing director of NatWest Insurance Services (NWIS), said: "We realised we were getting an increasing number of enquiries from people living together. We therefore drew up some notes, which have been issued to staff."

He added that the bank, the largest independent financial adviser, included in its training what different groups of customers will require.

Some of the unmarried couples may never have married; while others have been married to other partners in the past and may not have been divorced. All their needs are different and care has to be taken.

For example, unmarried couples taking out a mortgage are advised to take out a mortgage protection policy giving the proceeds to the survivor, says the bank.

NWIS has been inspected by Dr Oonagh McDonald, the former MP who produced a report on the competence of investment salesmen for the Securities and Investments Board this year, after an invitation from the bank.

This audit proved to be very beneficial and while she expressed herself as very satisfied with the way in which we currently operate, she made some useful recommendations for the future," said Mr Wells.

BRIEFINGS

The Halifax has raised its first-time buyer discount from 0.7 per cent to 1.25 per cent, giving a mortgage rate of 13.25 per cent.

Borrowers can lock into lower payments with a 12.35 per cent fixed-rate mortgage guaranteed for five years from Confederation Life.

General Portfolio's maximum income account series II rates have been cut by 1 per cent. A three-year account will earn 11.75 and a two-year account 11.5 per cent. Northern Rock has also cut rates by between 0.2 and 0.55 per cent.

NBC has introduced a corporate personal equity plan (Pep) for both its employees and other investors, who can buy £6,000 of its shares a year.

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LETTERS

Societies adapt to change

From the director-general of The Building Societies Association

Sir, Peter Rein (Letters, November 3) suggests that it would be alarming to relax controls on building societies, and that this would be to the detriment of the small investor and the owner-occupier. He cites the "Savings and Loans" debacle in the USA and says that the mind boggles at the thought of what would have happened if there had been deregulation of building societies at the start of the last boom. He suggests that many people would have lost their life savings and at least 20 to 30 per cent of societies would have gone to the wall.

This is nonsense. The experience of the past few years has been that building societies have diversified both modestly and cautiously, and as a result they can boast profitability that compares very favourably with that of banks. The American thrift crisis was not caused by deregulation, but rather by an inadequate supervisory mechanism.

Mr Rein suggests that we are justifying new legislation for building societies on the grounds that the Abbey National has converted and the Alliance and Leicester has purchased a bank. This is not correct. These points are merely made as an indication

of the continued blurring of the distinction between banks and building societies. As societies and banks increasingly compete so it is more necessary to ensure a consistent regulatory framework.

As Mr Rein suggests, building societies are concerned that they do not have as much flexibility as they need to tap the wholesale markets in the event of the retail markets proving insufficient for their needs. He states with great authority that there is not going to be a bull market in equities and therefore that societies have no need to worry. Sadly, I do not think this reassurance will satisfy

this reassurance will satisfy

Mr Rein rightly says that building societies are among the most important national assets in the United Kingdom.

They have achieved this status by constantly adapting to changing market conditions. The 1986 Building Societies Act helped them greatly in this respect and now is not too soon to begin thinking about new legislation which must take account of the market which will exist in the mid-1990s.

Yours faithfully,
MARK BOLEAT,
Director-general,
The Building Societies
Association,
3 Savile Row, W1.



Ernie's nature

From the director of National Savings

Sir, Mr Gee and Mr Wallis (Letters, November 3) make some good points on Ernie and random numbers.

Mr Gee reminds us that we now have standard odds and some "random" as haphazard and irregular. Mr Wallis argues that the same number could be chosen at random in the same draw, but seems to think that we are making checks to stop this happening.

I can assure Mr Wallis that the same numbers do indeed come up in the same draw —

perhaps 20 times a month. We do of course check Ernie's numbers. We are only allowed to give a winning number one prize in a draw. So if the number comes up twice it gets the higher prize, and the lower prize goes to another winning number.

In National Savings we would be worried if the same number never came up twice — Mr Wallis is quite right on this. The Government Actuary is not checking on the basis that the same number would only come up once.

He is checking to ensure

that Ernie's numbers are random in the widest meaning of that term. And Ernie's monthly check-up has always given him a clean bill of health.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN A. PATTERSON,
Director of Savings,
Department of National
Savings,
Charles House,
375 Kensington High Street,
W14.

From Mr Austin G. Feeney

Sir, I found your article on Ernie (October 20) most interesting. Until recently I held the maximum holding of £10,000 worth of bonds. I have now

never won more than a £100, with a number of £50 prizes. At the present moment I hold £7,000 worth of bonds which I soon plan to cash in as I am convinced, like your reader John Duncan, that something is amiss.

I have been doing independent research into Ernie for the past three years. I travel all over the UK with my job, and I have spoken to hundreds, and I mean hundreds, of people who have anywhere between £10 to £10,000 invested with Ernie. I have yet to meet anyone who has received more than a £1,000 prize. I would truly and sincerely love to hear from any of *The Times*' readers, or indeed any of the 28,000 people who hold £10,000 worth of bonds, and the 400,000 who hold £1,000 or more.

Yours sincerely,
AUSTIN G. FEENEY,
39 Filby Road,
Swaffham, Norfolk.

● Letters are welcomed, but *The Times* regrets it cannot give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.

Wrong connection

From Mr John Crompton

Sir, Any hopes I may have had that the electricity privatisation would lead to a better response to customers have been dashed even before it has taken off.

I used a coupon in a newspaper advert to register with the Share Information Office — having found it difficult to get through on the telephone. The coupon requested only one's full name and address. I have now

received confirmation from the Share Information Office in Bristol that I am registered — but for shares in the wrong company.

The explanatory leaflet explains the necessity to be registered with the company board for which one is a customer in order to receive the customer incentive benefits. It also states that they have registered people in accordance with their address.

I have now had to write to Bristol — contact by telephone still impossible — to advise

them of the correct details. My point is that it would surely have been better to request people to state which board they were a customer of in the newspaper coupon as everybody would surely know the answer. It looks as if the methods used by the Share Information Office to assess this information are no more accurate than those used by the old electricity boards to produce estimated bills!

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CROMPTON,
14d Donovan Avenue, N10.

Plea for fair tax on loan perk

EMPLOYEES who receive loans from their employers at preferential rates of interest are fighting for a fair deal on the taxation of this perk (Sara McConnell writes).

Those with cheap mortgages, in particular, say they are paying too much tax. This is because the Inland Revenue is using an official rate of interest that is higher than the standard rate of interest charged by the main lenders.

Tax bills are worked out by deducting the rates paid from the official rate of interest and charging tax on the difference.



Pocock: seeking change

The official rate is 15.5 per cent, which is 1 per cent higher than most mortgages. Until this week the official rate was 16.5 per cent.

The problem mostly affects employees of banks, building societies and other financial institutions. Employers will normally lend employees between £40,000 and £50,000 at an interest of about 5 per cent. Interest on any portion of a mortgage above that is usually charged at the customer rate.

Unsecured loans or season ticket loans with rates of interest lower than the official rate are also liable for tax on the difference. The rules apply even if the loan is interest free. But the Revenue will ignore any benefit of less than £200 a year. For example, on an interest-free season ticket loan of £1,000 a year, the Inland Revenue would assess the benefit at £150, 15.5 per cent of £1,000. This would keep an employee comfortably within the £200 tax exempt limit.

Banks, building societies and unions are lobbying for an amendment to the regulations to be included in next year's Budget, after an unsuccessful attempt this year.

Charles Pocock, senior taxation manager at Barclays, said: "Barclays, along with other clearing banks and financial institutions, is pro-



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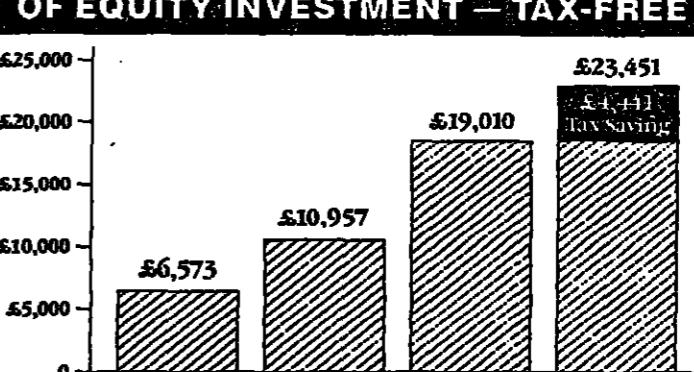
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Once again the investors come last in the considerations of an insurance company. Holders of Sun Life's US bonds fund will be sent letters on Monday telling them that the life company has decided to close the fund on December 14.

The policyholders have not been consulted on the decision and are being given just five weeks' notice until the closure. If they do not respond to the letters their investment will be automatically transferred to Sun Life's fixed-interest fund. With a total of £1 million invested, the fund is small and its performance in a sickly sector has been poor. It has given an average growth of 4 per cent a year over the past five.

But now, at the bottom of a bombed-out US bond market, is not the time to force investors to bail out. David Kauders, an independent financial adviser who has more than 50 clients in the fund, is hopeful that the American bond market is about to rise as American interest rates fall.

Investors have been attracted by his arguments that sterling is too high and that there are gains to be made from such a fund as

the pound falls. Now they find themselves dumped unceremoniously in a fixed-interest fund with none of the growth potential.

Those investors who find the offer unacceptable and decide to transfer their investment to other companies still offering US bond funds will find themselves out of pocket. They may also incur a capital gains tax bill. Others could face surrender penalties on their policies.

Since the crash of 1987 investment groups have been telling investors that they must keep faith and not to withdraw from the market. Here is a group of investors who have made a conscious decision to go into a specific fund and who will not be able to sit it out and wait for an upturn on their investment. They can rightly feel robbed.

Sun Life says it has 34 funds and, during a review, decided there were a couple of funds that did not warrant keeping because of their size. Mr Kauders argues

that the fund in question did not take much managing as it was primarily invested in medium- and long-term bonds.

The cost in disillusioned investors could well outweigh any savings the insurance group makes. They and their brokers may think twice before putting money with an insurance company that treats them in such a cavalier way.

Split interests

Joint bank accounts are likely to lose a lot of their attraction for millions of couples next year. The big four

banks have decided not to pay interest gross to non-taxpayers who have joint accounts with taxpayers when composite rate tax is scrapped in April.

The explanations for their reluctance to offer this basic service is that it will cost a lot, and that their computers are not up to it. They also maintain that paying the interest in equal halves may cause legal difficulties later on.

Building societies, however, are just getting on with it. So are TSB and Abbey National, whose roots probably bring them closer to their customers than their loftier high street rivals.

There are 15 million non-

taxpayers. They are mostly housewives, children and pensioners. It may be that because they have low incomes the banks are less interested in them than they would be if their earnings were higher.

But it should be remembered that many of them are only temporarily non-taxpayers, and their partners may have high salaries and investments. Others will grow up to be the high net worth individuals that banks spend so much to pursue.

Joint accounts are the basis of the household finances of a large proportion of couples. Many will have to rethink this if the accounts involve them in long and tedious reclaiming of tax, which they need not have paid in the first place.

The accounts make financial sense. They allow couples to amalgamate their funds and earn higher rates of interest than two single accounts would provide. In addition, they ensure that a

non-working wife or widow is not stranded without money.

It seems a little disingenuous for banks, who have been telling customers since the introduction of independent taxation in April that interest earned on joint accounts is regarded as belonging to couples on a 50/50 basis, to hide behind trust law to stop them actually paying the interest in two lots.

The decision affects both

interest-bearing current accounts

and savings accounts, with as

many as one in three joint

accounts having a non-taxpayer.

Where current accounts are

concerned the amounts of

interest will be mostly trivial. On

average each party might expect

to earn £15 a year in interest. The

tax involved is probably too

small to bother claiming back.

With savings accounts there is a

real loss in having to wait a year

without access to the money

deducted.

The delay will give couples

ample time to decide whether

they want to transfer accounts to

an institution that will only

deduct as much tax as is

necessary and not more.

Insurers consider tapping bonuses



Scarfied: judgment

A CHANGE in the way life assurance companies disclose their profits could encourage with-profits companies to furnish shareholders with funds that until now have been considered as policyholders'.

The funds at stake run into billions of pounds and are referred to as a life company's "estate". They are funds not needed to maintain existing policyholders' bonuses and have arisen because previous generations of policyholders did not receive all the bonuses they should have.

Although the question of ownership has never been formally settled, proprietary companies — companies with shareholders — have traditionally taken the view that about 90 per cent of the estate belongs to policyholders and 10 per cent to shareholders. Investment profits are then distributed proportionately.

But in a recent report by Goldman Sachs, the investment bank, it is suggested that life companies are moving towards attributing a higher proportion of their estates to shareholders. Indeed, arguments can be advanced that the whole estate belongs to them, it says.

The principle supporter of the move is London and Manchester Assurance, which last month confirmed that it was moving towards placing 100 per cent of its estimated £187 million estate in the hands of shareholders.

David Jubb, chief executive, said: "We would take the view that the traditional 90/10 basis is not the right one ... that part of the estate which isn't needed for policyholders' expectations may be regarded as belonging to shareholders. I think we are moving towards that and that others may follow."

Goldman Sachs and other analysts believe that the introduction of a new accounting procedure for life offices, proposed recently by the

more than the basic minimum for their policyholders.

In insurance law, the basic minimum is defined only as the "realistic expectations" of policyholders, which leaves ample scope for the company's estate to be channelled off to shareholders over time.

Larger companies that have increased their shareholders' profit ratios recently include the Prudential, Refuge Assurance and Britannia Assurance. These companies' estates are still growing and at the end of 1989, were estimated to stand at £5.9 billion, £907 million and £1.2 billion respectively.

Other big players such as Legal & General and Guardian Royal Exchange have adopted a different route and used policyholders' funds to develop new sales outlets. Goldman Sachs reports that this also weakens a company's estate while benefiting shareholders.

Senior life industry executives seem unwilling to plain their views on the question and ethics of estate ownership. Hugh Scarfield, president of the Institute of Actuaries, said that any company increasing its shareholder participation ratio should be judged, not on principle, but in its own right.

He said: "I can see circumstances when it's right — if there is extra capital coming in from shareholders and there are fewer with-profits policyholders, for example. But if it's just a case of trying to bleed the with-profits policyholders' surplus then I can see everything wrong in that."

Youssef Zai, an analyst with UBS Phillips & Drew, drew attention to an idealistic alternative. He said it had been suggested at an actuaries' that if life companies were genuinely concerned about ownership they would return the estate to the former policyholders or their relatives. It is they, after all, whose premiums gave rise to it, he added.

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COMMENT

LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

هذا من الممكن

non-working wife or widow is not stranded without money.

It seems a little disingenuous for banks, who have been telling customers since the introduction of independent taxation in April that interest earned on joint accounts is regarded as belonging to couples on a 50/50 basis, to hide behind trust law to stop them actually paying the interest in two lots.

The decision affects both interest-bearing current accounts and savings accounts, with as many as one in three joint accounts having a non-taxpayer. Where current accounts are concerned the amounts of interest will be mostly trivial. On average each party might expect to earn £15 a year in interest. The tax involved is probably too small to bother claiming back. With savings accounts there is a real loss in having to wait a year without access to the money deducted.

The delay will give couples ample time to decide whether they want to transfer accounts to an institution that will only deduct as much tax as is necessary and not more.

million, but FOIS claims that he was losing money.

Some bank accounts in Mr Batterman's name have been frozen as a result of court action by FOIS. Mr Cutner gave warning that legal proceedings are still at a very early stage and investors could be in for a long wait.

There is, though, no explanation as to why FOIS chose Mr Batterman to manage investors' money. A simple check would have shown that he had been expelled from the New York Stock Exchange, and was barred from the investment industry for two years for his involvement in stock manipulation.

Nor is there any adequate explanation as to why two Dutchmen operating from an office in Brussels should choose to incorporate their business in England and then hide it in a part of the country said to be almost inaccessible.

Both Messrs Groskamp and Niemantsverdriet were involved in a previous attempt to attract funds for a pooled options scheme. In 1982 they were directors of First National Securities, a London subsidiary of FOIS.

First National attempted unlawfully to solicit funds for investment schemes that were not authorised by the trade department. The company ceased to operate when it was revealed that the real name of John MacMillan, a senior executive, was Norrey Brooke. Brooke, a known swindler who served three years in prison for fraudulent conversion, took \$3 million from investors in 1981 through Churchill Capital, a company offering a pooled options scheme.

The composer could have bought the rights to the name, simply to avoid any embarrassment its use might cause, but he chose instead to apply to the High Court for an injunction barring the misuse of his name. Lawyers say Mr Tuck similarly attempted to establish a lavatory cleaning business in the name of a prominent banker.

Attempts to contact Mr Tuck this week failed, as both telephones at his premises, the new registered office of First Overseas, were giving the number unobtainable.

The man First Overseas blames for its misfortunes is Michael Batterman, a New York commodity trader. David Cutner, the company's lawyer, said this week that FOIS was suing Mr Batterman for \$10 million in fees and damages.

He said: "The claim is that Mr Batterman overstated the amount of profit that had been earned, and as a result of that was able to obtain for himself incentive payments." He drew fees totalling \$4

annual management charge. It will, however, make a charge of £1.50 for dividend collection and £10 for each subsequent call payment.

Granville Investment Management expects investors to use the tax-free plans if the shares open at a substantial premium. Shareholders will be able to transfer shares bought for £6,000 into a plan even if their value is higher. The charge for opening a plan is £50 with a 1.25 per cent annual fee. There will also be a one-off charge of £10 for each electricity stock registered.

Sharelink has announced that it will take on new clients for its application and dealing service, which will allow clients to deal with all their investment letters issued. The Birmingham broker has reached its target of 96,000 customers for its privatised service.

David Jones, chief executive, said that by balancing the capacity with the customer demand it hoped to provide a reliable and efficient service. Perhaps, it's a coincidence, but a pension plan that takes up to 10 years to build a nest egg for a 20-year-old hardly has a money

Limited access: FOIS's registered office at an isolated farmhouse in West Yorkshire

who sent \$11,000 to FOIS last year became concerned when he was unable to obtain promised monthly statements of account.

He then asked for his money to be returned, but was told by Tony Groskamp, a FOIS director, that the company was engaged in litigation with one of its advisers.

First Overseas is run by two Dutchmen, Coenraad "Tony" Groskamp and Lambertus "Bert" Niemantsverdriet. Until recently its registered office was in Brunswick Place, London. The office was, though, no more than the address of a company formation agent that took in mail for the firm.

In August, Mr Groskamp told the Registrar of Companies that FOIS was moving its registered office to an address in Rippington, a village outside Halifax, West Yorkshire. Enquiries this week revealed the address to be that of Craig Tuck, whose company, Straightgate, advertised earlier this year that for an annual fee

WEEKEND MONEY

In the bare, fluorescent-lit basement of a former shoe emporium in the King's Road, Chelsea, the morning rent by the bawling screech of shopfitters' drills and saws, Sophie Mirman and Richard Ross, her husband, are reading a letter from their bank manager.

It is a friendly letter, jolly even, full of good wishes for their new venture, an offer to discuss a loan, and an invitation to lunch. They must be a forgiving lot at Barclays, given that not many months ago Mirman and Ross crawled out from under the ruins of their last business enterprise owing the bank a tidy £16 million.

Their last lunch at the bank was a disaster. Over aperitifs the manager spelt out the uncomfortable truth that their Sock Shop chain of boutiques was up to its armpits in the swirling waters of debt and that he was hauling in the lifeline. Nothing kills the appetite as surely as a bolt of bad news.

That day marked the beginning of the end of a dizzying roller-coaster ride of breathtakingly short duration for a woman who had not yet arrived at her 34th birthday. From being the personal favourite of the Thatcherite enterprise culture, the City's favourite smart "geil" with an empire valued on paper at £72 million making her the 188th richest person in Britain, Mirman saw her 80 per cent stake in one of the brightest retail ideas of the Eighties decline to rather less worth than an Imperial Chinese Railway bond.

Mirman and Ross finally parted from Sock Shop in July, giving as their reason dissatisfaction of the way the minority shareholders were being treated. They walked out with nothing, whereas a couple of years before they could have sold up for millions. But they still had their shirts on their backs. The debt was corporate, not personal, and the only perceptible shift in their lifestyle has been the trading of the BMW for a Volvo; a purely practical exchange, Mirman insists, to cope with the ferrying of two small children and a large dog.

I traced Sophie to her bunker in the King's Road, that pilgrim's way of fashion and niche retailing, where the Mirman phoenix was about to rise as a shop selling the kind of upmarket children's wear and accessories never seen in C&A. That was on the eve of the opening. It looked a promising enough site, set between Peter Jones in Sloane Square and an Early Learning Centre. At the end of the block, ironically, is a branch of Sock Shop, which seemed to be trading quite healthily under its new owners.

Mirman's new enterprise is very King's Road indeed. Named Trotters, it exhibits about the place pictures of its fictional proprietor, Dunwoody N. Trotter, a large fat cartoon pig. The former Saxon branch has been transformed into an emporium for upmarket children, selling clothing, footwear, accessories, toys and haircuts.

All is designed to take the little darlings' minds off the ghastly business of shopping and having their locks trimmed; something children inexplicably find a truam-inducing experience. The shoe department is kitted out like a train, the hairdressing salon like a ferryboat with portholes giving views of mirrors and a fish tank.

"There is nothing more aggravating than going shopping with children," said Mirman. "They get irritable and bored. I hope there will be enough in this shop to keep them entertained. It will be fun for the children, which will make it much easier for the parents. The idea came about from shopping for friends who had children, buying presents and so on. It wasn't a particularly pleasant experience. Having children of my own has confirmed that."

Mirman confessed that the idea had been brewing for at least five years, which means she had it in mind while her previous Sock Shop venture was still enjoying its halcyon period. "We have thought about it very carefully. It has taken us some time to get this particular shop. We wanted the King's Road.

Mandarins fall from heaven

CAPITAL CITY

From JOE JOSEPH IN TOKYO



Pinnacle: Mount Fujiyama

on the transfer of high-flyers from public to private life. But as so many other things, Japan has perfected the system. Frustrated foreigners call it Japan Inc., that powerful marriage of government and industry that has guided Japan to riches and driven some of Tokyo's trading partners to despair.

The civil servants who have parachuted from the clouds for their earthly rewards are prize catches for industry boardrooms. Jobs in the private sector are often

gifts from grateful companies for help given in sewing up deals and, perhaps, keeping out a foreign rival's imports. They are also, of course, ways of buying useful contacts in the corridors of power.

For that reason, most of the 246 who found second careers — nearly one-tenth of the top civil servants who retired last year — came from the finance, construction, transport, trade and industry and agriculture ministries, men with power to grant licences and to decide who obtains which fat contract. As usual, the finance ministry led the field, with 56 of its best old boys on the transfer list.

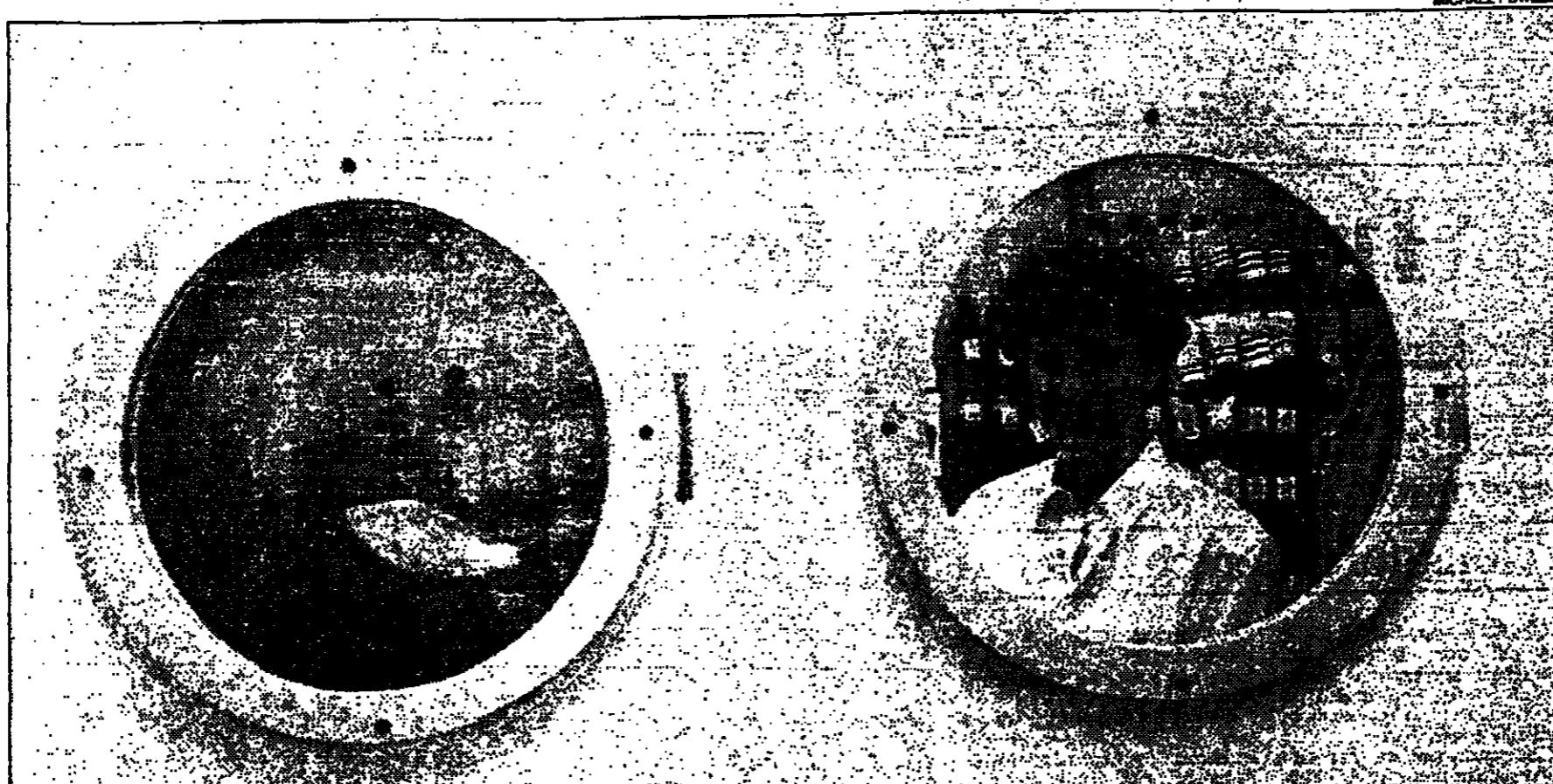
To prevent abuses, Japanese law prohibits public officials from accepting positions for two years after their retirement with firms with which they had had official dealings. But civil servants can ask for the restriction to be waived. Generally it is.

But the Recruit influence-peddling scandal that erupted last year exposed some of the back-scratching that can go on when things go wrong.

Kunio Takaishi, former administrative vice-minister of education, and Takaishi Kato, ex-labour vice-minister, have both been charged with taking bribes in return, it is claimed, for helping to bend laws that might affect the job vacancy magazines published by Recruit.

Shigeno Kano, a former top man in the labour ministry, was given a suspended one-year prison sentence after being found guilty of the same charges.

Japan hardly has a monopoly



Fresh horizons: Sophie Mirman gazes into a porthole on the ferryboat that bedecks the hairdressing salon at Trotters, a children's emporium and her latest retail venture

Woman who charmed the socks off City

By ALAN HAMILTON

BUSINESS PROFILE

Sophie Mirman

It's such a good catchment area." With her husband, Richard Ross, Mirman has set out to be noticeably different from other retailers of children's wear. She is also determined not to repeat previous mistakes. "We shall keep this company small, and keep it private. The service has got to be 100 per cent right. It will be impeccable. We want it to be a small, enjoyable business. We want everyone involved to have quite a few."

By the time she left school she knew she was destined for retail management, and took a typist's job at Marks and Spencer because of the high reputation of their training scheme. She soon found herself secretary to Lord Sleef, the chairman, who encouraged her to train for management.

She did everything from sweeping shop floors to manning the till, but confesses now that M&S training taught her nothing about running her own publicly-quoted company. Her only real experience of business, she admits, was watching her parents running rather genteel enterprises from the front room of their home.

When she was 24 she was introduced to Roy Bishko, a South African entrepreneur with a wiz and niche marketing idea: selling men's ties from tiny boutiques in railway stations, to brighten the lives, or at least the shirt fronts, of the grey commuting masses. Sophie and he hit it off, and she joined him as his general manager, helping to establish and expand the successful Tie Rack chain.

But after two years, she says, she and Richard Ross, the company's financial controller, became disillusioned with the way Tie Rack was being run and vowed to break out on their own. Thus did Mirman and Ross conceive and give birth in 1983 to Sock Shop, with a little kiosk on Knightsbridge Underground station selling wacky tights for women and jolly socks for men to complement their Tie Rack ties. When they counted their first day's takings they amounted to a handsome £632. They went out and got soundly drunk.

During the next four years Sock Shop expanded spectacularly and by 1987 the couple, by now married, took their baby on to the United Securities Market. The day they did that, Mirman now says ruefully, was the day they stopped enjoying themselves. The City, however, went wild over socks. When the shares were offered they were oversubscribed 53 times. Opening at 125p, they

had doubled by the next day. One City analyst recalled the heady days of the launch. "It was a real hothouse environment in the successful middle years of Thatcherism. Retailing was the rage, and niche marketing the buzzword. The field was full of glamorous entrepreneurs like Aizah Roddick at Body Shop, Debbie Moore at Pineapple Studios, Ralph Halpern at Burton and George Davies at Next. Mirman was really quite a small player in that league, but she got a tremendous amount of publicity and hype — far too much for what was really a modest-sized company."

"There was also the fact that Sophie was a woman, and a very up-front and personable one at that. The City, conscious of having a chauvinist reputation, was bending over backwards to back a woman. She was very smart to keep Ross in the background. He did not have her personality and City people didn't take to him very much."

But it was not to last. By the start of this year the previous year's profit of £2.6 million had turned into a six-month trading loss approaching £4 million, not to

mention enormous debts. Mirman blamed it on an overwhelming conjunction of bad luck, while the City accused her of mismanagement and went gunning for the supposed financial brains of the enterprise: her husband.

As an accountant, it was suggested, he should have seen the trouble coming and acted sooner. Some said he paid too much for sites to open new shops, especially during the company's disastrous expansion into America. Rumour told of Sock Shop's bankers regarding Ross as a liability and wanting him off the board.

Now, with the dust settled, Mirman will have none of that. "It is totally untrue that our bankers or any other of our backers wanted Richard off the board. It's easy to blame someone who is behind the scenes. I was high profile, so it was more difficult to blame me for events. But we were totally equal partners. The decisions were very much taken together."

"Of course we made mistakes. Sophie was a woman, and a very up-front and personable one at that. The City, conscious of having a chauvinist reputation, was bending over backwards to back a woman. She was very smart to keep Ross in the background. He did not have her personality and City people didn't take to him very much."

"Any one of those factors we could have coped with, but not all of them together. And there was absolutely nothing we could do about any of them. I felt like a

rabbit caught in headlights."

And all the while the analysts had pronounced that she was doing the right thing. This brought a sour interjection from Ross, busy in a far corner while I talked to his wife. "It's too easy for analysts to say we were badly managed. They're not the ones who carry the can. And many of them work for companies that are losing millions. The only crime we committed was that we tried."

Why, I asked Mirman, did they not take the money and run when the company was worth millions? Selling their 80 per cent holding at the top of the cycle would have brought a huge personal fortune. It would have been easy to sell up, she admitted, but they did not.

The source of Sock Shop did not, however, take the shorts off its founders' backs, for they made sufficient money in the early days to afford a large house in Hampstead, north London.

"The £72 million valuation never went to our heads; and anyway it was only on paper. We didn't go out and buy a big Rolls-Royce or a chateau in France. Our standard of living has not basically changed for some years." They sold up in Hampstead and moved into central London three years ago. There they have the rare inner urban luxury of a garden, which provides Mirman with one of her few relaxations.

Leaving Sock Shop was a wrench which, if anything, brought Mirman and Ross closer together. Both say that, at the

time, they blamed themselves for everything. But not any more.

And here they are starting another business, which they say has restored their self-confidence shattered by earlier events. "It's a terrible time to be in retailing because of the doom and gloom in the high street. On the other hand, it's a good time because of the opportunities available," Mirman said. "There are many sites available at more reasonable prices than there were two or three years ago. Even in Oxford Street, reverse premiums are being offered to people to take the lease on existing shops."

It seemed a reasonable assumption, therefore, that Mirman had acquired her shop in the King's Road for a bit of a song. But were the financiers of the City not now dealing with her from the end of a rather long bungee?

Not at all, said Mirman. Both bankers and suppliers continued to be very supportive and excited about her new project. The truth of the matter is that they are financing it themselves, and have no plans to expand beyond a single shop. Once bitten, indeed.

Ross has been put in charge of the shopping, while his wife, up front as ever, rushes around suppliers in search of suitable merchandise. But she denies any suggestion that she has given her husband a modest task with which he cannot go wrong. "We were totally equal partners before, and we will be the same again."

The City admits that its expectation of Sophie Mirman, niche-hosiery maven, was very high; and that she was running hard to keep up with the unrealistic growth targets her investors expected of her. But in the end, they feel, she should have stopped and told herself that the targets were unreachable.

The buck stopped at Sophie, but she was an insufficiently strong or experienced "swimmer" to go against the tide in the big pond.

Now she is in a small pond, and if her new venture does not work out, there will be no voracious City sharks and piranhas to blame.

Mirman and Ross will be accepting the invitation to lunch with their bank manager, and this time intend to eat it. But to Barclays' undubbed relief, they will not be asking for a loan.

SCHOOL FEES PLANNING

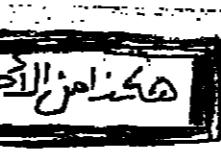
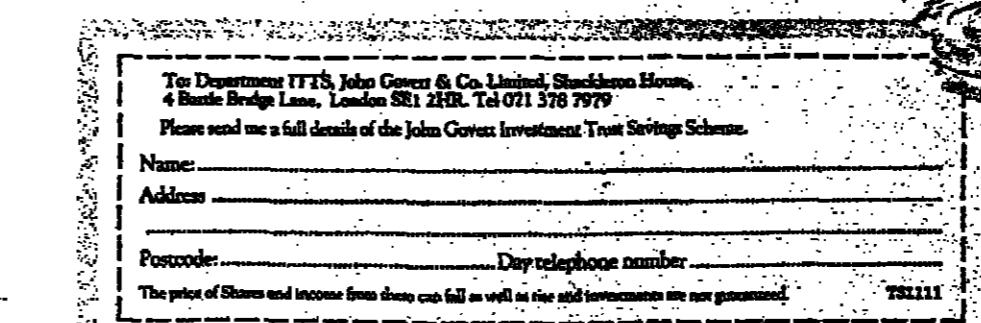
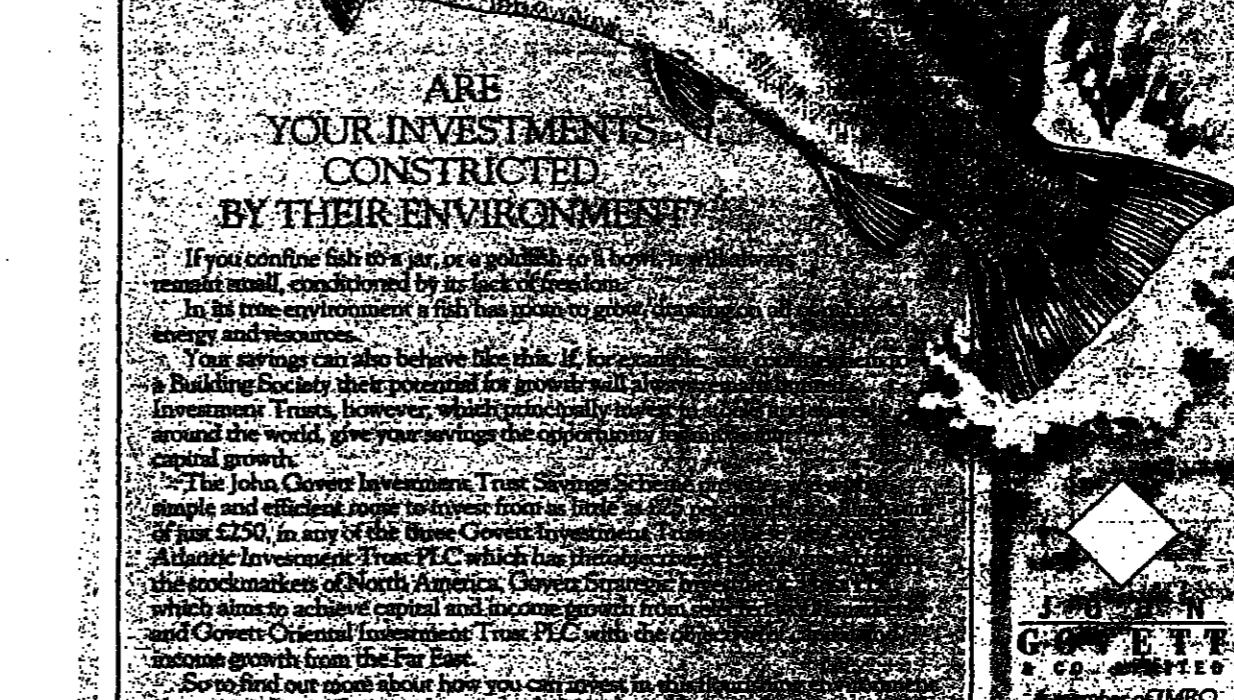
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SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10 1990

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SUMMARY

Investment group holes up

INVESTORS wanting to find out more about a British investment company, which appears to have a centre of operation in Brussels, have to travel to an isolated farmhouse in West Yorkshire.

The registered office of First Overseas Investment Services can be reached down a private road and its address is not printed on road maps.

Several million pounds of clients' money is apparently missing and the commodity, futures and options firm is refusing to honour any redemption requests... Page 42

On good terms



Sophie Mirman is still on good terms with her bank, although Sock Shop, her last business venture, collapsed owing £16 million. She told Alan Hamilton of the disastrous lunch that marked the beginning of the end... Page 43

Loss of life

Shareholders could benefit at the expense of policyholders if life companies decide to pay them a higher proportion of their estates..... Page 42

Tax on subsidy

Subsidised mortgages are costing workers too much because of the way tax on the concession is calculated. The Inland Revenue insists on comparing the loans with an artificial interest rate that is higher than normal... Page 41

On the draw



Ernie answers back in this week's letters page and explains what happens when the same bond number comes up twice in one draw... Page 41

Split decision

New rules will allow banks to split the interest on joint accounts so non-taxpayers can receive interest gross. But the big four banks will not be offering this service... Page 40

Conflict of law

Concern about a possible conflict between the Financial Services Act and common law was voiced this week by the Law Commission... Page 40

Fair shares

Free dealing in shares of the electricity companies is being offered by the Skipton Building Society. Other offers follow thick and fast... Page 42

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Retreat into recession

Even now, the chancellor finds it hard to concede the country is in recession. But his autumn statement painted a bleak picture of Britain's prospects. When will the pain end? Can John Major conjure up the recovery the Tories need to win the general election? Analysis in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow.

C 5

Hunt begins for forgotten millions

Barbara Ellis reports on the research recovering unused income from thousands of long-forgotten charities

A QUIET treasure hunt is under way all over Britain, with researchers seeking out under-exploited assets and unused income belonging to thousands of charitable trusts.

The researchers say that with help to update centuries-old objectives and antiquated investment policies, the long-neglected charities could become a useful source of financial assistance to an unexpectedly wide range of people around the country.

The Charity Commission lists about 170,000 charities on its central register. In September, it began a year-long national census to check how many of those were still active, or even in existence.

But some counties are already ahead of the field. In Devon, public libraries have full lists of all the trusts within its borders, gathered in a three-year survey begun in 1987 by Bill Bailey of the Community Council.

Initially, Mr Bailey wrote to the "correspondents" or secretaries of more than 4,000 registered charities. Less than 20 per cent responded, many only to say that Mr Smith or Mrs Jones had died years previously. But research into local archives and contacts with vicars and postmasters eventually helped complete profiles of 96 per cent of the charities.

"Nobody has coal fires these days," said the trust's treasurer. "We were building up the money, so the charity commissioners said it could be for gas or electricity."

So far, the trust has given £10

towards heating bills to one pensioner and is waiting to accumulate enough income for another gift.

Efforts to impose a moral code linger among a number of trusts.

In Witherslack, Cumbria, couples who marry in the village and stay

By SARA McCONNELL

CHARITIES are warning people to be careful to check the credentials of fundraisers who claim to be collecting money for good causes because they do not have the time or money to monitor the collectors' activities themselves.

Charities report continuing problems with fundraisers using the names of reputable organisations to collect money from the public and then keeping some or all of the cash.

There is no central agency to check the references of collectors and any monitoring has to be done by the charities.

John Kingston, director of fundraising for the Save the Children Fund, said: "We have hundreds of people raising money as volunteers and we couldn't check them all."

"There is no register and it would be impossible to keep one. So the public needs to be careful. It would be naive to expect there will never be any problems. But collecting money under false pretences is fraud."

The Charity Commission has confirmed that it has investigated complaints by a London charity that two organisations had set themselves up as fundraisers with names that gave the impression they were charities.

The commission only has limited powers of investigation and most concern registered charities. A spokesman said that the two

organisations were not registered and so fell outside the commissioners' jurisdiction.

But he added: "People write in

complaining about the activities of fundraisers, and although most of our powers are directed towards the activities of registered charities, if people go around pubs, for example, pretending to collect for charity then walking away from it, this would concern us."

Tighter controls over fund

raising, which would include

strengthening the commissioners' powers, were proposed in a Home Office white paper in May 1989.

But these were not included in the Queen's speech this week.

The white paper split out the

findings of a working party ap-

pointed by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) in 1985.

The abuses disclosed included "excessive

sums retained by some fund

raising practitioners, claims that

part of the proceeds from the sale

of goods or services will go to

charity when, in fact, the amount

given to charity is much smaller

than donors might suppose, and

dubious fundraising practices car-

ried out in a charity's name but

without its knowledge or ap-

proval".

If proposals in the white paper

became law, fundraisers would

have to provide donors with a

breakdown of how much of the net

profit, gross profit or money

received would go to the named

charity.

Already, fundraisers making

house-to-house or street collections

have to obtain permission from

the local council or police, but the white paper proposes that

collectors should have to apply to

a charity in advance for a licence.

Anyone collecting for charity on

"private property to which the

public has unrestricted access",

such as a pub, would also need a

licence.

But the government rejected the

working party's plans to require all

fundraisers to obtain the charity's

written permission in advance on

the grounds that it would dis-

ourage law-abiding fundraisers.

Hospitals, such as the Royal

Brompton and the National Heart

Hospital in London have central

fundraising departments. But

people also approach individual

departments.

Dr Michael Rigby, director of

paediatrics at the Royal Brompton,

said: "People approach us

because they are known to us from

being treated at our hospital. A lot

of small amounts of charitable

donations come through these

sources and about 80 per cent is

from grateful patients. Every ef-

fort is made to check that bigger

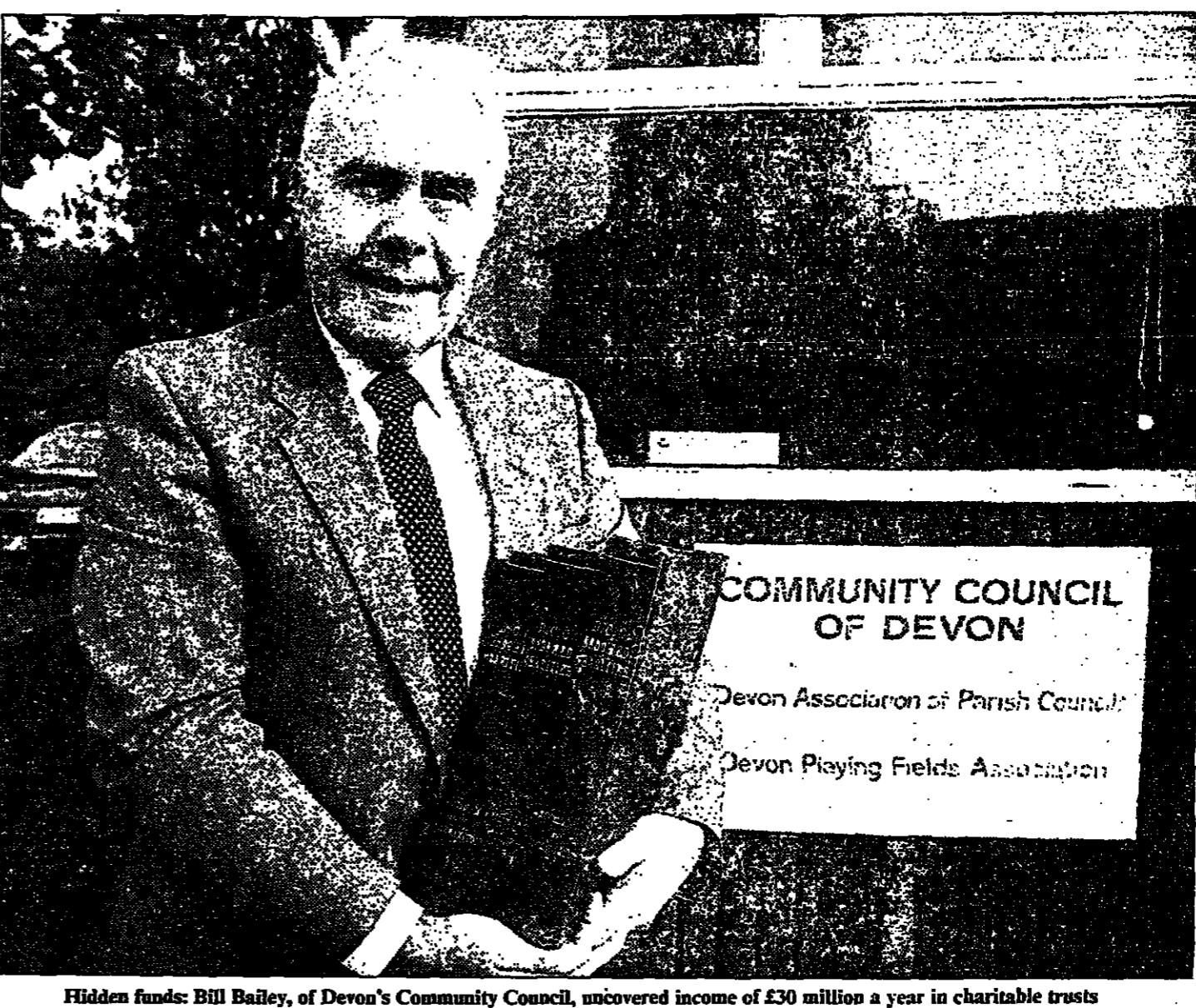
donors are registered charities, but

perhaps we don't always check as

carefully as we should. The poten-

tial for fundraising fraud is

enormous."



Hidden funds: Bill Bailey, of Devon's Community Council, uncovered income of £30 million a year in charitable trusts

childless for a year can claim a "maid's portion" of about £10 from a trust set up in 1662 under the will of Dean John Barwick, whose legacy financed the building of a church and school, also left coal and Christmas allowances for people who were deemed by the clergy to be in need.

Devonians are catching on to the idea of looking to obscure charities for special finance, said Mr Bailey. He has even been asked to find a charity that could help send a Plymouth man's son to America to study guitar playing. A musical education trust was found that was able to make a grant.

"You have to start by looking for the area of benefit. If you live in Plymouth, it is no good going to a charity in Exeter," he said.

In Dorset, Jenny Hyde of the Community Council is reaching the end of a survey of the county's 1,200 charities. Total income uncovered is close to £2 million, plus nearly another £1 million in undistributed income. The annual income of the individual charities ranges from 25p to £60,000.

As in Devon, charities are being encouraged to update their aims. Trusts originally set up to provide funnel petticoats or warm cloaks for widows have been allowed to switch their attention to heating

bills. Meanwhile, grants for apprentices have been reinterpreted as finance for higher education.

Some of the richest charity finds have been in Wiltshire, according to Doug Simpson, who researched the county before moving to work on the Charity Commission census.

'A heck of a lot of charity trusts were supposed to be dishing out five loaves and two small fishes but they had stopped that in the 1700s'

authority when central government took on both tasks. The charity, which was rediscovered in 1974, had a lengthy battle to establish the rights to £6 million worth of assets, including land.

More recently, another Wiltshire charity successfully reclaimed from the church three acres of prime development land near Swindon, after a local historian spotted its apparently lapsed charitable status.

Mr Simpson said that counties such as Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Suffolk had recognised the potential benefit to communities in tracking down charity money. Hereford, Lancashire and Worcester had also started research.

However, Kent, with more charities than any other county, had been resistant to the idea of supporting any research. Mr Simpson noted.

People thinking of applying for charity grants should not be put off by stated objectives such as "relief of the poor of the parish".

"In terms of the charity, it is all relative," said Mr Simpson. "If you live in a small village where everyone has two Porsches and you only have one, you are relatively poorer."

IN TIMES OF CHANGE LOOK TO BLUE CHIP PERFORMANCE

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